



THE
PRACTICE
OF
DEVOTION:
OR, A
TREATISE
OF
Divine Love.

Wherein the Rules of this Excellent Vertue are
Explain'd, according to the Spirit of the Gospel,
and in Oppositon to false Devoto's.

For the Use of all the Faithful, and particularly,
for those who Suffer for Christ.

Written in *French*, by Mr. PETER FURIEU.
And now faithfully done into *English*.

With his Pastoral Letter; giving a full account of the
horrid and barbarous Cruelty used to the *French*
Protestants.

In Two Parts.

L O N D O N :

Printed for Charles Rivington, at the *Bible and*
Crown, in *St. Paul's-Church-Yard*. MDCCXI.



1608 | 2141.

TO THE
HONOURABLE
Madam Clarke.

MADAM,

THE following Treatise of DIVINE LOVE, or PRACTICE of DEVOTION, is so very agreeable to Your Religious Temper and Practice, That I hope You will Pardon my boldness in presuming to prefix Your Name before it. You can very well understand, and
A 3 relish

THE DEDICATION

relish, by Your own Experience, those noble and sublime flights of Divine Passion, which the Author does at once practise and describe in his following Meditations and Prayers: For they are but a transcript of Your own Thoughts in your secret Aspirations after GOD, which You cherish with so much pleasure and delight, as to despise all the glittering Vanities of the World, when they stand in competition with Your Love of GOD, and those Duties which Your Love engages You to perform. But tho' this

The DEDICATION.

Does entice me to enter upon
Description of those excel-
lent Vertues, for which You
are justly celebrated by all
that know You; yet I for-
bear, because it is a Subject
above my Ability, and which
I know will be offensive to
Your Modesty. I shall
therefore only beg leave to
say, That as You are justly
admir'd by all for Your
Piety and Vertue, so none
can more sincerely honour
You, than

Your most Humble and
Obedient Servant, &c.

A



A Pastoral

LETTER,

*To the Souls touch'd by GOD,
and sensible of the Afflictions
of the CHURCH:*

*To convince them, That the
Practice of Meditation of
DIVINE LOVE, is
the richest Spring that can
be Open'd for the Consola-
tion of Afflicted Souls.*

TIS to you, O Christian Souls,
that I ought to Address myself,
to give you an account of my Design,
and the Reasons which mov'd me to
put Pen to Paper, and Write the fol-
lowing Treatise. Ye are to me in stead
of the Publick, and I shall always Ap-
peal from all private Judgments to
yours,

yours, and submit myself entirely to it.

The true end which I propose to myself, is your Consolation and my own. I understand, that our Affliction cannot be greater than it is; God grant that our sorrow may be as great as it ought to be: *I am the Man who hath seen Affliction by the Rod of his fury.* God hath given us Months of Misery, Days of Darkness, and Nights of Anguish. *There is no sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger,* Lam. i. 12. God hath preserv'd my Life above sixty Years, notwithstanding the long and troublesome Inconveniences which have been occasion'd by my toilsome Labours and Vexations. But this favour of God hath been turn'd into Bitterness, by the Calamities which mine Eyes have seen fall upon the Church of God, the pillar and ground of Truth, upon that Church to which I owe my Christianity; upon that Church I say, to the Edification of which I was devoted from my Infancy, by a pious Father and Mother, who lov'd God almost as much as he can be lov'd in this Life.

After



After I had past my Infancy, and the first heats of Youth, I answer'd, as well as I could, the design of those whom God made use of to put me in the World. But as soon as I had attain'd the Age of making profound Reflexions upon my own State, and that of my Neighbours, I foresaw all the Miseries which we now feel. I was afraid lest God should forsake us, because we had forsaken him, and I saw such an universal Corruption of Manners, and decay of Piety, as made me Tremble. *Thou hast left thy first Love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and Repent; and do the first Works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place except thou Repent.* We are not in a condition fit for a more gentle Discipline, for we have not obey'd the Exhortation: And therefore God at last has discharg'd upon us a terrible clap of Thunder, which has made the fragments of our Cottages to fly away unto the ends of the World, and scatter'd the broken Remnants of our sad Shipwreck into all the foreign Shores.

Our Sanctuaries are burnt up and reduc'd to Ashes, our Lights are extinguish'd: *Jerusalem* is oppress'd with Grief,

Grief, our *Sion* is desolate, insomuch that those who pass by shake their Heads at it, and the ways which lead to its holy places are become a frightful Wilderness. The Gallies, the Prisons, the Monasteries, the Isles, are full of our Confessors: Nay, the Cities in many places are more than half Deserted. Commerce suffers very much, and is, as it were, destroy'd: The scarcity of Silver is extraordinary; but the scarcity of Men is yet greater. God, for the chastisement of our Persecutors, has sent among them a bloody War, very general Famines, grievous Diseases, and even such as are contagious. And these accidents, joyn'd with the Desertion of so many persecuted Protestants, have diminish'd the Inhabitants of this Kingdom near one Third. But all these Chastisements, which should have open'd the Eyes of God's Enemies, serv'd only to harden them. The Gibbets and Scaffolds are everywhere set up, prepar'd for those who resolve to be faithful unto Death. The Marshal D' *Estrees* came very lately from doing Military Execution in *Poitou* and *Xantonge*, which creates a horror in all wise Men. In *Languedoc* Thirty or Forty Believers are condemned

demned all at once to the Wheel, the Gibbet and the Gallies, for having pray'd to God in Secret, without any shedding of Blood.

What Pen or Tongue can make a just representation of your Miseries? What Words can describe them? Who for instance can duly represent the furious Cruelties which are exercis'd upon our Brethren the Confessors in the Gallies of *France*, to oblige them to salute the Host, and to uncover during the time of the Service? When a miserable Wretch is Condemn'd, the Sentence being executed, the Punishment is finish'd, and the Executioner is not allow'd to encrease it by his own private Authority. But these illustrious Martyrs of Jesus Christ, refus'd to adore the Jesus on the Popish Altars, because they were persuaded, that this Worship was Idolatry: This was their Crime for which they were condemned to the Gallies, and the punishment is aggravated a Thousand ways. When they have suffer'd the punishment impos'd upon them, they ought to be acquitted: And because they continue in that which is call'd blindness and obstinacy, ought they to incur new Penalties? This is unheard of, and an Injustice that cries

The cruelties exercis'd in the Gallies upon our Confessors.

aloud for Vengeance. If they would have defil'd themselves with Idolatrous Worship, they would not have been in the place where they now are: And yet upon this pretence all manner of Cruelties are exercis'd upon them. They are stretch'd out quite naked upon a Plank, or a great Canon of the Galley, and so many blows are laid on upon their Shoulders and Reins, as makes them quite black with Contusions, and covers them all over with Blood. And because these Believers do only feel the pain of the Blows, and do not see with their Eyes the horrible condition in which their back-Parts are, therefore, to make them suffer in all their Senses, one of their Brethren is sent to them, cover'd all over with Blood and Wounds, and they are told, That unless they submit to bow to the Host, during Mass, they shall be put in a bad condition or worse. We must confess, that Nature shrinks at this sight more than can be express'd, and 'tis not to be wonder'd at, if some are overcome with the Temptation. This is what happen'd a little while ago to a Confessor of the City of Uzès, who was one of those that were taken on the Road to Orange. He refus'd to take

take off his Cap during Mess, whereupon he was laid upon the Plank to be Tortur'd, and after he had been cruelly handled, one of his Companions was brought to him, whose back-Parts were cover'd all over with the marks of the barbarous usage he had met with from his Tormenters, on purpose to signify unto him, that he must endure again the same Torture, and be reduc'd to the same miserable State: Whereupon he succumb'd, and promis'd to take off his Cap. Being cruelly battered'd by the blows he had already receiv'd, he fell sick, which oblig'd them to carry him into an Hospital, where he died of his Wounds: But he died glorifying God, and refusing to adhere to the *Romish* Idolatry; and he was buried with *Turks* and *Infidels*, because he was faithful to his God.

To colour such a barbarous Treatment 'tis alledg'd, that the refusal of these blessed Confessors proceeds only from their Obstinacy and Self-conceit, because nothing but a civil Honour is required of them to be given to the Host, which is such an Honour as one Friend gives to another when he passes by him. But these cruel and Ignorant Divines ought to know, That

the Homage which is paid to that which is look'd upon as an Idol and a false God, becomes a Religious Worship, altho' the Ceremony be equivocal, and may be us'd in the practice of Civil Honour. When the Orientalists salute their Superiors, their Custom is, to prostrate themselves upon the Ground, and would a true Believer prostrate himself before *Dagon*, and excuse himself by this wretched Reason, because it is no more than a Civil Honour? Religious Adoration and Civil Honour are not distinguish'd by external Actions, but by the Object to which this Honour is pay'd. The same Ceremony being us'd to a Man, is nothing but Civil Honour, and being us'd to that which is call'd God, or honour'd as God, is truly Idolatry. In the mean time the Pretence is specious, and the Temptation terrible; and therefore we cannot sufficiently praise God, who endow'd our Confessors with such Reason and Courage, as to refuse with a firmness of mind that base Compliance which was requir'd of them, nor admire too much the more than human Constancy of these Believers, and their Love to God and the Truth: *Of such People the World was not worthy.*

I return now to the Sufferings which were common to all the Persecuted who persever'd in the true Faith. The Husband was separated from his Wife, the former being either in Exile, or in Prison: The Woman was put into a Convent with other Women, the greatest part of whom, renouncing that Humanity which is usually shown to their own Sex, were become as great Persecutors as the Men. The Fathers and Mothers saw their dear Infants snatch'd out of their Arms, from the Breast, and their other Children taken away of all Ages: Of which there is no Example in the History of those Pagan Princes, who thirsted most after the Blood of the Faithful.

To Slay, to Massacre, to shed Blood, to drag to the feet of an Idol, to fill the Mines and the Quarries, the Prisons with poor Wretches; to force the Conscience, to extort involuntary Worship, are Actions common to all Persecutors: But the persecution which you suffer, has at least three Characters, which distinguish it from all those which the Church hath suffer'd in all former times to this day.

The first is, That which we have just now mention'd, *viz.* The taking away of

Three Characters which are peculiar to the present Persecution.

of Infants by force, which is a Violation of the most Sacred Laws of Nature. The second Character of distinction, is this, That flight upon the account of Religion, is become a Crime which is punish'd with Death, or other most cruel Torments. This is the Crime to which they have given the name of an *Escape*. The Saviour of the World did not suppose it possible for Men to make this a Crime, for he has said, *When they shall persecute you in one place, flee into another*. If he should now return into the World, we would ask him; what should we do in such a place and time, wherein the flight which you advis'd is become a Capital Crime? If we be surpriz'd attempting a flight, we are treated like those who have a design to rob their Neighbour, and plunder the Prince's Exchequer. This is also a thing unheard-of, in all the Persecutions which the Church suffer'd for the space of One Thousand Seven Hundred Years.

The third Singularity in our Persecution is this, That when Providence has brought us into a place of safety, in spite of all Obstacles, the Keepers, the Decrees, the Menaces, the fear of Gallies and Gibbets, if you complain of

you

your hard Usage, this Complaint is im-
puted to you as a Crime. We cannot
represent lively enough the injustice of
Persecutors, who immediately tell
Ought you to talk thus, when you
in the midst of Peace? But what
signifies this? Is there any Peace be-
tween *Jerusalem* and *Babylon*? And may
we always be allow'd to say to this
prostitute, who is Drunk with the
blood of the Saints, what *Jehu* said to
the Son of *Ahab*; *What peace as long as*
fornications and witchcrafts of thy Mo-
Jezebel are so many? Had we any
peace in the fruits of the last Peace?
the contrary, is not the War renew-
ed and the Furnace heated seven times
more than before. Shall we then cease
to complain of our Persecutors, until
they have ceas'd to persecute us? If
there be among the Bishops and other
Ecclesiasticks, some wise and moderate
persons, they ought to have no share
in the blame which we charge upon
the Conduct of those who observe no
rules of Equity, Sincerity and Reli-
gion. But who can keep silence when
he considers those wretched Priests, the
rowers of the Gallies, who cause all
these Cruelties which we have just now
mention'd, to be inflicted upon our
Con-

Confessors? Formerly they conceal themselves, and said, they were not the Men who were Solicitors against us. But now they have taken off the Mask and openly push on the merciless Captains to the practice of these Barbarities. The Bishops from whom they have receiv'd their Commission approve and authorize them.

Besides, 'tis our great Interest, to open the Eyes of those People who are misled by false Pastors to afflict and crucify their fellow-Countrymen: For when they shall know what Spirit they are acted by, they will understand that they are oblig'd to abandon such Guides and to return to the sentiments of Piety and Mercy towards those Men, who are their Brethren, even according to the Flesh: For here the Son rises up against the Father, and the Brother against his Brother.

We must not therefore grow weary of representing in native Colours, to the Eyes of the People in the *Romish Communion*, the Frauds, Injustice and Violence of those Ecclesiasticks, who compose the Cabal of pretended Devotion and who abuse the easiness of the highest Powers. Perhaps at last these poor abused People will open their Eyes and understand

understand, that a good Religion cannot inspire Men with a Conduct so opposite to the Laws of Nature and Christianity. The present Persecution has already open'd the Eyes of many, and nothing more proper to finish their Conversion, than to render them more and more attentive to the bad Characters of their Pastors, who observe neither Equity nor Justice, even with regard to their own Brethren, when they pursue the satisfaction of their Passions. This plainly discovers the Trick of those who repeat so often, that 'tis very much for Interest, to manage nicely the Words and Complaints we use against the Ecclesiasticks our Persecutors. 'Tis sufficient that we preserve a due respect to the Supreme Powers, and that we accuse them of nothing but being surpriz'd by pernicious Counsellors. It was never accounted a Crime in the most Tyrannical Reigns, to represent to the Prince, that he was surpriz'd in matters that concern his Religion or Justice. What this signifies is very well understood; but in fine, this is the Cover, under which the most imperious of mankind will suffer the Truth to be told to them.

It

It suffices us that we manage the Interest of Charity ; and we believe that we do nothing contrary to it, in speaking briskly against the Enemies of the Truths we maintain, since our design is only to show them how much they are in the Wrong ; and besides we are continually pouring out, by ourselves and before God, most fervent Prayers for the Conversion of these cruel Enemies.

The crueller the Afflictions are which you Suffer, my dearest Brethren, the more we are oblig'd to labour for your Consolation : *Even the Sea-Monsters draw out the Breast, they give suck to their young ones ; the Daughter of my People is become cruel like the Ostriches in the Wilderness.* In the Country where you are, you meet with none but such as insult over you for your Misfortunes ; and those who complain of your hard Usage, are oblig'd to suppress the Marks of their Compassion ; and so no body draws out of the Breast to you. We are therefore the more oblig'd to let in upon you the rivulets of Milk and Honey which flow from the breasts of the Church, and from those living Fountains of the Old and New Testament. All the Passages are shut up, which convey

convey our Consolations to you; but God is able to open them again.

'Tis upon this Prospect, that we have form'd a design of meditating upon Divine Love, being fully persuaded, that it is the most copious Source of Consolations that can be open'd to Afflicted Souls. I conjure you to consider well the Proofs of this, which I shall now offer unto you.

ARTICLE I.

The Duties of a persecuted Church, in the practice whereof she is assisted by Divine Love.

IN the first place 'tis to be consider'd, The first means to put an end to our Miseries, is to return to the Love of God. that the Source of all our Miseries is this, That we have not lov'd God enough, or we have not lov'd him at all. As long as we enjoy'd Peace by virtue of these Edicts, which our own felicity and good Services, and the good of our Forefathers had purchas'd, liv'd in a profound Security: We indulg'd all our Passions, we were devoted to the Idol of the God Mammon; we run greedily after Riches, Pleasures and Pleasures, with the same

same earnestness as other Men do ; and we forgot him that made us ; we did no longer hearken to his Voice : *The Ox his known his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib* ; this was some kind of acknowledgment, some degree of Homage. But we sacrific'd to our own Nets, and burnt Incense to our own Drags, and we were deaf to many Voices which call'd upon us to return to our God. He whose name did so often fill our Ears, did never enter into our Hearts. We were vain in our Actions, and in our Words ; we lov'd the World, and therefore the Love of the Father was not in us. Being bewitch'd by the deceitful Charms of the Father of Lies, we run after him who told us : If thou wilt worship me, and forsake thyself of my Religion, I will give thee such and such Things. There were numberless Revolts and Apostacies among us, before God smote us with the last Stroke.

Since the Absence of the Love of God is that which has destroy'd us, it must be the Return of Divine Love that will save us. Zele is nothing different from Love ; for Zele is nothing else but a holy fervour, and an eminent degree of Love. We have lost this holy fervour. *Be zealous therefore and Repent, O thou afflicted*

afflicted, subverted and desolate Church.
 Rekindle thy fire, if thou wouldst have
 God to rekindle thy Light, and set up
 again thy Candlestick. Let us give such
 signs of our Love, as we shall explain in
 the following Treatise; and without
 doubt God will return to us to love us
 as before. For in fine his Bowels are
 always mov'd for us: *Say not, the Lord*
hath forgotten me, for though the Mother
should forget the fruit of her Womb, and
the Infant which she Suckles, yet will I not
forget thee; and tho' the Mountains should
shake and be removed, my Grace shall not
depart from thee. If our Love to God
 had as firm foundations as the Love of
 God to us, it could never have been
 divorc'd from him; and if we can now
 again such a Degree of Love, as will
 make it so firm, we may be assur'd that
 the Wound will be clos'd up and heal'd.

The means of recalling and bringing
 back God to us, is, To return to God:
 and this Return consists in that which
 the Holy Scripture and the Church call
repentance. Now, Meditation and the
 practice of Divine Love, are more ca-
 pable than any thing else of afflicting the
 heart, of rendring it contrite, and in-
 firing it with all the motions of true
 repentance. O poor Soul, afflicted and

The Second
 means of
 bringing us
 back to God,
 is that Re-
 pentance
 which Love
 produces.

Part I. b smitten

smitten of God, turn thee towards that God who smites thee; and in considering him, thou wilt behold his Beauty, Excellency and Majesty, his Power, and all his infinite Attributes: Thou wilt see also all his Goodness, Bounty, Mercy, and the vast multitude of his Benefits. If thou considerst thy God in these two ways, of his Beauty and Goodness, it will be impossible but thy Soul will be inflam'd with Love to him so that thou wilt be forc'd to cry out *He is beautiful whom my Soul Loves, and he is altogether lovely!* At the same time thy Heart will tell thee, that thou hast not any ways perform'd the devoirs of so great a Love. O thou afflicted Church, these Reflexions will necessarily lead thee to Repentance, and to the sorrow of Contrition: Thou wilt bewail the days of thy languishing Love and perceiving that to be the source of all our Miseries, thou wilt break off thy former Course of Life by Repentance and return to thy God, and thy God will return to thee: He will consider the *Ruins of Eternity*, as thy Destroyers pretend them to be; he will have compassion upon thy Miseries, and for his great Mercy's sake put an end to them. If any Vertues are straitly link'd together

ther, they are Love and Repentance. A Soul that loves is never so sensibly affected, as when it offends the Person whom it loves, and the anger of the Person beloved will wound the Heart of the Person in Love. O thou afflicted Church, if thou return to the Love of God, thou wilt not be able to find Tears enough, to bewail the cruel contempt of his Love who hath loved thee. Thy Love being awaken'd will then bring thee back to Repentance, and thy Repentance will make thee to return into the ways of Love. And these two ways of Love and Repentance, will make God return into the ways of Mercy: he will likewise Repent and will Love thee. He will Repent of the Evil he has done unto thee, but will return and do so no more, when thine Eyes, being bath'd in Tears of Love, shall force him: *Turn away thine Eyes from me,* says he, *for they offer violence to me.*

The third Duty of an afflicted Church is submission to the Divine Will, *i. e.* The third effect of Divine Love is an amorous Submission. The Church shall kiss the Paternal Rod, saying with that Old Eli, *'Tis the Lord, let him do what he pleases.* Now nothing is more proper to inspire us with this Spirit of Submission than Divine Love. *Let the righteous smite me, his blows shall be always*

pleasant unto me. What can appear harsh to us, when it comes upon us from a dear hand? The hardships of a Person belov'd are the more insupportable when we believe that he has not deserved it: But when we are once persuaded of the tenderness of Love, and the Wisdom of the Person who smites us, his blows are so far from casting us down, that they awaken and lift us up. They wound our Head, but they open our Heart, and the Spirit of Grace pours into this wounded Heart the Balm of *Gilead*, which closes up all our Wounds and sweetens all our Sorrows.

There is no Reason for Submission but what is contain'd in the acts and exercise of Divine Love. This makes the Soul silent before God, and submit to him, because it considers his Supreme Majesty, whose splendor and excellency eclipses all that is great and splendid among the Creatures; who makes even the whole Universe to disappear before him, which is as nothing in comparison of this Globe of Light and Glory. Such a view as this swallows us up, and takes from us all thoughts of resisting a God so great and so glorious. But what is it which discovers this God to us to be so Great and Majestick, but the view

we have of him when we are seeking to Love him? The view of his Sovereign Wisdom imposes also a Religious Silence upon our afflicted Souls: *I will lay my hand upon my Mouth, because thou hast done it. Thou who art Wisdom itself, profound in thy Counsels, and wonderful in thy ways; Thou who makest the Wisdom of the Wise Foolishness.* But when shall we find this Sovereign Wisdom of our God? 'Tis not fully discover'd to us by the Light of Natural Reason, which teaches many things about it, and yet does not fully inform us: And the darkness which Prophane Persons spread over this infinite Wisdom, extremely obscures it in the Eyes of the Flesh. And therefore we cannot perfectly find it out, but in that amorous Attention which makes us contemplate our God with the Eyes of our Love. We know God and all his Beauties by studying them; and we study them when we have a mind to Love them.

There is a submission of Fear, a submission of Obedience, and a submission of Love. The submission of Fear proceeds from the Spirit of Bondage; it is the way wherein we begin our return to God: But fear brings nothing to perfection; the submission which it

Three sorts
of Submission
in Afflictions.

produces is forc'd. When a Slave is under the Hands of a cruel Master, he humbles himself at the first Blow, that he may shun the rest, and his humiliation is of no great Merit. The submission of Obedience advances much further; *To Obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Lambs.* This is a kind of submission which offers to God a Sacrifice of our Pleasures, of our Goods, of our Repose, of our Liberty and Life, and which says, Thou desirest them, O my God, and I must give them to thee, and tho' it were in my power to refuse them, I would not do it; if thou be pleas'd to leave them with me, I will enjoy them with thankfulness, and endeavour to pay thee Homage for them; but I would not for all the World retain them against thy Will, tho' it were even possible for me to do it. This submission rises a degree higher than the preceding.

But the most perfect and highest submission, is the submission of Love. The Soul from a principle of pure Love takes pleasure in its Sufferings, because it suffers according to the good pleasure of God, and for his Glory. Carnal Men do not at all understand this: They think 'tis very much for them to suffer

suffer with Patience, and do not imagine that any one can suffer with Joy; yet St. Paul tells us, *I rejoyce in my sufferings*. The Apostles being Whipt in the presence of the Council of the Jews, and by their Order, departed full of Joy, that they were counted worthy to suffer for the Lord. An infinite number of Martyrs have sung with a holy Joy in Dungeons and in Fire.

Since the Love of God alone yields this perfect submission, the submission of Love; 'tis plain, that nothing is fitter to dispose you to suffer for Christ, than the Meditation and practice of his Love.

The fourth Duty to which ye are oblig'd, when ye suffer a cruel Persecution, is that of Patience under your Miseries. But where shall we also find the Source of this Christian Patience but in Divine Love? Love is the Cause of our Submission to the holy Will of God, and the same Love produces Patience under the unjust Will of Men. These two Wills, the one very Just, which is that of God, and the other very Unjust, and oftentimes very Cruel, which is that of Men, concur together, and are never separated in the Persecutions which the Church endures.

dures. A Judge condemns a Criminal to be torn in pieces by Lyons, the Sentence is Just, and the Lyons execute it by their natural fierceness and fury. God, as the supreme disposer of Events, will have his Church to pass thro' the Fire, for the purification of their Love: Men execute this Sentence of the Sovereign Judge, by the inhuman Persecutions which their fury inspires them with; *Here is the patience of the Saints:* This very thing that the Will of God concurs and joyns in these Events, is a good Reason for Silence and Patience, even with respect to those who are the cruel Executors of these just Decrees of Heaven. Now, it is Divine Love which inspires us with this Holy Patience.

All the Blows which are given us by a dear and well-beloved hand, ought to appear to us pleasant, being persuaded that he that Strikes us loves us nevertheless. Consider, O faithful Soul, consider thy Afflictions in the beginning and in the end: The beginning of them is God, and his Justice full of Mercy; the end is thyself; they are thy Pains, thy Losses, thy Banishment, thy Prison, thy Scaffold, and thy Death: But nothing is to be plac'd between these two Extreames. 'Tis true, that in the middle

middle thou wilt find Tyrants Executi-
ners and Persecutors: But thou must
pass over this middle without taking any
notice of it, as if it were nothing, and
bear patiently thy Sufferings, as if they
came immediately from God.

Thou oughtest to preserve a Spirit of
Wisdom and Moderation, with respect
to thy Persecutors. Remember the Ex-
ample of thy Saviour, and say as he did,
*Father, forgive them, for they know not what
they do.* Thou canst not, 'tis true, say,
Thou oughtest not to refrain from a just
vengeance against those who ravage
the Vineyard of the Lord: 'Tis cer-
tainly lawful to be sensible of the Inte-
riches of God: He who said, *Love your
Enemies*, never said, *Love the Enemies of
God*. But take heed that your own In-
justice be not in this Case the over-ru-
ling Principle, which inspires you rather
than the Love of God. Take heed
that your own Love do not deceive you,
that your resentment against your
Persecutors does not proceed, much less
in destroying the Altars of the living
God, and putting to Death his Pro-
phets, than from your own loss of Li-
berty, Estate, and their design against
your Life.

The

The submission full of Love, which we now speak of, ought to produce its Effects with respect to the Instruments which God employs. A Church will never be thought to submit perfectly to its Father, if after it has kiss'd the Hand which strikes it, it bite the Rod with its Teeth. Men are in the Hand of God, the Rod wherewith he strikes; we must therefore kiss the Hand, and bless the Rod; *Bless those who Curse you*. A Soul which is fill'd with the Love of God by Meditation upon his Beauty and Goodness, will easily comply with these Sentiments of Wisdom and Moderation.

The fifth Duty inspir'd by Divine Love, is perseverance in the Truth.

The fifth Duty of a Persecuted Church is perseverance in the Profession of the Faith and Truth. This is the grand Design of Persecutors, *viz.* to oblige you to renounce the pure Religion which Worships God in Spirit and Truth; to oblige you to throw your censures at the feet of an Idol, and to adore all their false Gods. But 'tis certain, that Divine Love alone is capable of inspiring you with a vigorous perseverance. Whence proceeds so many shameful Apostates, which have dishonour'd your Communion, but from the want of Love? Ye have not lov

the Truth of God, *i. e.* Ye have not
loved God himself, *for God is Truth.* Ye
cannot love Truth, except ye love God,
ye cannot love God, except ye have
infinite Love for his Truth, which is
Essence and Glory.

To convince you, That your want
of perseverance proceeds only from a
want of Love, ask your own Heart
what made you fall and bow the knee
to an Idol? It will tell you, that it
was the fear of the Confiscation of your
Goods, of the loss of your Offices, of
Punishment, and of a Prison: It will
confess, that the Words of the Devil,
He will give thee, have Enchanted and
arm'd you. Now, all these things
are so many Proofs, that you have lov'd
the World and its favours better than
God, and consequently they are
so many Proofs, that ye have not lov'd
God at all: For to love any thing better
than God, is to hate God and despise
him: *He that gathereth not with Jesus
Christ, scattereth. He that loves Father or
Mother, Wife or Children, or Goods, or Ho-
nour more than him, is not worthy of him.*

God of his Paternal Goodness, and
his infinite Condescension maintains our
perseverance by many Motives ta-
ken from our own Interest: Be
faithful,

*faithful, says he to us, and I will give
a Crown of Life. To him that overcometh
will I give to sit with me upon my Throne.
Take heed that no Man take thy Crown
from thee. And it can be no Crime in
an afflicted Church, to have regard to
these Motives, since God has proposed
them to us: But it must be confess'd, that
the pure Love of God is the most noble
and also the most powerful Motive to
our perseverance; for a Soul inflamed
with the fire of this pure Love, will be
able to overcome all Impediments. If
thou persevere in the Truth only, for
the hope of a Crown, God will not
value thy perseverance: This is Self-Love
and not the Love of God. True perse-
verance is steadfast in the ways of God,
chiefly from the Love of God and
Glory, after which God will permit
thee to call into thy assistance the Moti-
ves of thy own Interest. When
Abraham, the Father of the Faithful,
lifted up the Knife over the Throat of
his Son *Isaac*, and was ready and resolved
to Sacrifice him out of pure Love, without
any Interest of his own, then he
cries out, *Now I know thou lovest me.*
So also when we have Sacrific'd our
Fortune, our Country, and even our
Life and our own Interest to the Glory*

God and his Love, then he will say
with an air of Satisfaction, *Now I*
know that ye Love me.

Proceed now to the sixth Duty of The sixth
Persecuted Church, which is, that Duty which
who have fail'd in their Perseve- Love inspires
ance, and have yielded to Temptati- is, rising a-
on, thought immediately to return to gain after
themselves, and rise again after their our Fall.

Divine Love will also cause this
Resurrection in them; a Love
which mortally Wounded itself, and
cruelly offended the Person Beloved,
throws itself upon its own Heart
its negligence, and tears it's own
veils. A Soul truly faithful, who
betray'd its Jesus by saying, *I know*
not, is transpierc'd with its own
wounds: A look of its Master wounds it
more than all the Arrows of its Ene-
my; it goes out, it returns, it weeps
bitterly; Love is the cause of all this:
Son, Son of Jonah, lovest thou me? Lord,
thou knowest I love thee: But thou hast
betray'd me Thrice: *Lord, thou knowest*
all things, and thou knowest that I Love
notwithstanding my Weakness and
Fall. By this ye shall know, whe-
ther your Brethren have fallen through
Weakness, or from a revolting Spirit:
ask them, my Brethren, do ye Love the
Lord

Lord Jesus? If they tell you the Lord knows that we Love him, tell them to Repent then, as *St. Peter* did: Live no any longer in the Mire and Filth of Apostates. But perhaps some will say that they meet with new Obstacles, that there was less danger in continuing stedfast, and avoiding a Fall, then there is now in rising again. This is true yet, if Divine Love be predominant and bear Rule in the Heart, all the difficulties of returning to God will vanish; nothing can hinder the Spouse who was a-sleep, from running after her Beloved, when it awakes. Every Soul which loves God, is afraid of losing his Love: Now, it knows that nothing more stifles Love, than the unfaithfulness of a Spouse, and the Jealousy of a Husband; nothing provokes God like the Spiritual Adulteries wherein a Soul defiles itself in the sight of its Divine Husband. A Divorce comes infallibly: And what kind of Divorce is this, O good God! It is an Eternal Separation, a Total Exclusion both from Heaven, and from all the favours which God heaps upon the Souls who love him and persevere: 'Tis a terrible Banishment, by which the unfaithful Soul is cast into outer Darkness, where there weep

gnashing of Teeth. If a Soul
which has fallen thro' Weakness rises
up by Love, it's Heavenly Husband
receives it into his Arms ; for his Jeal-
ousy is not an Eternal fury, like that of
Jezebel, whose Wives have been unfaith-
ful to them.

Those therefore who have been so
weak and unhappy as to bow the
knee to *Baal*, must represent to them-
selves all the Motives which ought to
conduce to the Love of God : They
must view his glorious Face, and Me-
ditate upon his Majesty, his Power, his
Omnipotence, his Goodness, his Benefits,
his Love ; and they must say to
themselves, How could it be that I
should be so forgetful in this Case, as to
forget a God who has so many ways of
strengthening himself, and whom I have
so much Reason to Love ? I flatter
myself, that I have not deny'd my
Divinity ; but I ought to Remember that
God is Truth, and that the Truth of God
is God himself. He who denies his Truth,
especially he who denies it against
Conscience, is Guilty of Treason
against God ; as he who tramples
under his Feet the Edicts of a Prince,
is guilty of High Treason against Man.
O my God ! who lovedst me so far as
to

to give thyself up to Death, and out of Love to me exposedst thyself to most Cruel Pains, it might well be expected, that my Love of Acknowledgment, should also overcome all Temptations and all the Pains which would lead me to unfaithfulness.

Weak Souls, who dare not say, and suffer themselves to be catch'd in the Snares of the Devil, may very well rise again from a motive of Fear. But such a Repentance is altogether uncertain, and perhaps wholly unfruitful. A Slave who falls a-Sleep over his Whips is awak'd with the Lashes of a Whip, but a Son awakes from his Drowsiness out of Love to his Father. One Sin which leads us back towards God, and our Falls from a Principle of Love are better than a Hundred which are made from a Motive of Servile Fear, or mercenary Hope.

When therefore you shall represent to yourselves all the Horrors of the darkness and flames of *Hell*, these Reflections will not so certainly bring you back into the Bosom of the true Church, as the Meditations upon the Motives drawn from the Love of God.

This Treatise therefore of Divine Love which we now present you with, our

to be the most Powerful Remedy of all
 those we have yet given you, since we
 concern'd ourselves to bind up the
 Wounds of our *Jerusalem*.

We have already seen how this Di-
 vine Love will support you in the Practi-
 ce of the six great Duties to which you
 are oblig'd under your present Affliction.
 Hear now, what this Divine Love
 will further say unto you, that it may
 bring you to the Perfection requir'd in
 those Souls which suffer for the Love
 of God.

ARTICLE II.

*On Effects of Divine Love, which dispose
 to Patience and Perseverance.*

Divine Love will first tell you : O
 afflicted Souls, be perswaded that
 your Heart cannot be sensible at the same
 time of good and evil ; at least in the
 same degree. Violent Pains extinguish
 the Sense of Moderate Pleasures ; and
 great Pleasures do also stifle the
 Sense of Moderate Pains. A Soul swal-
 low'd up with Joys in the exercise of
 Love, cannot be sensible of it's
 Afflictions,

The 1st effect
 of Divine
 Love against
 afflictions is,
 that it takes
 off the Soul,
 and with-
 draws it from
 the sense of
 its Pain.

Afflictions, because the Afflictions of the present time cannot countervail, not only the Glory to come, but even the lively Sensations of present Grace; so the sense of the Love of God will hinder the sense of this Pain. The Soul suffers sometimes, happy Distraction. All the World knows, that a Gouty Person, who sees his House on Fire, escapes many times more nimbly than those who are most healthful.

A Violent object causes a Distraction in the Soul, which governs the Machine of the Body; so that it becomes insensible of a present Evil, by the View of a much greater Evil, which is very near at Hand; or of a great Good which affects and inflames it. Let us love God, and give to this Act of Love all the strength and sensibleness of our Soul, and it will suffer a Holy distraction which will deliver it from those sad and afflicting objects which are its Cross. But here is the difficulty, will some say, the Machine of the Body is easily moved and diverted by Sensible objects, whereas on the contrary, a pleasure purely Spiritual, a pure Love, will not be able to remove from it the sense of Temporal troubles. If it be so with thee, O Christian Soul, as I fear it is

much, this is a certain sign of the Weakness of thy Love. Internal Graces are so far from being too weak to cause Distractions in the Machine of the Body; that on the contrary we learn from the experience of great Saints, that it may be so swallow'd up in God, as to make the Soul become insensible of any other thing. 'Tis not possible to contemplate and to love God with an infinite Love, without falling into a kind of Ecstasy, which takes from us the sense of all other Objects. If we want this degree of Grace, as almost all of us do, let us never cease to Groan under this Infirmary, and to beg of God that degree of Love, which is necessary to make us insensible of all other Things.

Secondly, The same Divine Love will make you contemplate your God, holding him always on your Right-hand: *The Lord is on my Right-hand, and I shall not be mov'd*, will ye say with the Royal Prophet. If ye look upon his good God on your Right-hand, ye will see him minding your Wounds, wiping away your Tears and your Sins: You will see him with all his Graces, ye will see him with all his Blessings; *for on his Right-hand there is fulness of Joy, and pleasures for evermore.*

The second effect of Divine Love is, that it affords us great and solid Consolations in the Afflictions of the Church.

And if you contemplate him in the act and exercise of his Love to you, ye will be fill'd with Love to him; and the Love of God, whereof ye will receive sensible Signs, from the influences of his Grace, will comfort you in all your Miseries. My God loves me however I be, will you say: He loves tenderly his Church, his Spouse, and I suffer as a Member of this Church: But being assur'd, that he can never cease to love this Spouse, wherewith he has made a Covenant of Salt, an Eternal Covenant; I am also assur'd, that he will never cease to love me. This Church which partakes with me in my Sorrows, and for which I suffer, is a Companion which has done me much Honour: I suffer with my Mother, with the tender Nurse of my Youth, with my Queen and my Governess. This is an Honour to me, an Honour which will be follow'd with another Honour that is Eternal and Infinite; *for those who suffer with Christ, shall also be glorified together with him*; those who have borne his Reproach, shall also wear his Crown.

God comes to thee sometimes as clothed with Flowers, with Sweetness and Love in his Mouth; and sometimes he comes as clad with Thorns and Bitterness.

But take away the Veil of this Disguise, look upon thy God as he is in himself, and thou wilt find him to be always a loving God, a God of love and Mercy. 'Tis the Divine Love which will rend this Veil, and make thee see thy God, as he is in his own Nature; and the Practice and Meditation of this Love will furnish thee with all those solid Comforts, which thou oughtest to seek after in the Afflictions of the Church.

O faithful, but afflicted Soul, learn this Lesson, that 'tis only the Love of God that is capable of becalming the most violent Passions; and indeed we must confess, That we have not one Motive or Thought produced by the Spirit of God, in which the Flesh does not interpose and concern itself: Our Spiritual Joys have almost always a Tincture of something Corporeal; and so in our Afflictions, which have for their first principle the Spirit of God, and a concernedness for his Interests, the Flesh introduces its Passions, and undoubtedly 'tis this which most sensibly Torments us: For, after all, they are these bodily Motions which tear the Soul in pieces. But we must know, that of all Vertues, Divine or Human, there is not any which becalms the

The third effect of Divine Love is, that it is alone capable of calming the Passions.

Storms of Passions, like that of Divine Love. This Love does not relish the foolish commotions of Human Love. A Soul fill'd with thy Love, provided it be predominant, enjoys a perfect Tranquillity; in loving God it possesseth him, and is sure of possessing him; and this Possession which is no longer accompanied with the fear of losing the Object of its Love, is a Sweetness which swallows up all bitter Afflictions.

Human Prudence has furnish'd us with a Hundred ways how to calm our Passions, and not one besides this ever succeeded. The Sage Worldlings, who succeed better in the Government of their Passions, are commonly such as know best how to dissemble. They who are of a heavy, earthly temper, are beholding to their dull Nature for their Tranquillity. And those who have a Heart more firm, and a more lively Imagination, may by study proceed as far as to suppress the External Motions whilst the Inward-Man is still more cruelly torn in Pieces. But Divine Love, which possesseth the whole Soul, does also entirely settle it, and put it in a state of perfect Tranquillity. Faith, Hope, Humility, and the other Christian Vertues, have certainly a great influence

ence upon the Passions, to put a stop to their fiery and impetuous Motions: But these Vertues have no efficacy proportionably to what they have, when they are excited by Divine Love. Acknowledge therefore, O Christian Soul, that the cruel Persecutions of the Enemies of the Church, make your Blood to boil in your Veins, and stir up your Passions, whether you will or no, and tho' you do not perceive them distinctly. Be sensible of this Evil, and run to seek for a Remedy, and say, *Why should I suffer my Passions to hold correspondence with my Enemies, by permitting them to encrease my Misery?* God will have me to be sensible of the Afflictions of his Church; I am, and will be so, and therefore I freely shed my Tears: But why should I be mov'd with Anger and desire of Revenge, against those Wretches, who make God their Enemy? Why should I suffer my Rage to be kindled against those who hate God, and by this means are infinitely Miserable? I will not refrain from a holy Jealousy and Indignation, when I behold the Triumphs of the Enemies of God; but my Compassion will over-top my Indignation, and put a stop to its Motions. Why should I abandon myself to Envy and all the

c 4

Passions

Passions which the Prosperity of the Wicked may inspire good Men with? For, in fine, *the Triumph of the Wicked will be of short continuance, and their Hope will quickly perish.* Now, 'tis Divine Love which will inspire thee with these Holy Reflections: For, if thou lovest God, and be assur'd of his Love, this will also be assur'd, O faithful Soul, that thou oughtest to have no powerful Motive, but that which brings thee nearer thy God.

The fourth Effect of Divine Love is, that it sweetens all the bitterness of Afflictions.

To still the Passions, and to sweeten Afflictions, are very much alike, for all the bitter Sorrows of the Heart proceed either from its Passions, or from the absence of God, and the privation of his Love. Thus the effect of Divine Love, which we call the sweetning of the bitter sorrows of the Heart, is very like to that which we have call'd the *calming of the Passions.* The Pleasures of Divine Love are inconceivable, and cannot be express'd but by those who feel them; neither can they well express all that they feel in this kind. Therefore, O afflicted Souls, whom the Lord hath griev'd in the day of his Wrath by the Desolation of *Jerusalem*, fill yourselves with the Love of God, blow up this Sacred Fire; and this Divine Fire being

being kindled in you, will over-top all other flames, not excepting those of a most violent Grief. Why do these holy Martyrs upon the Scaffolds, and these Confessors in the Gallies and the black Dungeons, feel all those Pleasures of which they boast? 'Tis certain, that this proceeds from a vigorous Love of God; *for many Waters cannot quench this Fire.* There are certain Vertues in the exercise of which there is much Bitterness and Grief, and these are chiefly Human Vertues. Valour is not excell'd but in Battles, Blood and Sweat: Patience is an excellent Work, but it is exercis'd but in the midst of the greatest Afflictions; it overcomes them, but it does not quite extinguish them. But as to Divine Love, it sweetens all bitter Sorrows, and calms all Storms. A Soul in the bosom of its God is in a place of Refuge, and in a Retirement where Grief and Bitterness cannot approach it. In the present Afflictions therefore of the Church, ye must not burn with a black and dark fire which is call'd Melancholy; but burn with this Sacred fire which is call'd Love, *and Love enlighten'd*; and this Love enlighten'd and enlightning will show you, in the profound darkness of your Calamities, a hundred

hundred Objects, which a black Melancholy would conceal from you: ye will see in it a God merciful and wise, who by a severe Mercy makes you pass thro' the Furnace, and thro' the Crucible, that he may purify you like Gold: ye will see in this Love God holding in his Hand his Crowns, and saying to you, *Hold fast what thou hast, let no man take thy Crown. Be faithful until Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* But above all, ye will feel God loving you, and pouring into your Wounds the Balm of Gilead: These are the Divine Attributives of his Grace, which are sweeter than Honey, and the Honey-Comb. And if once ye relish these Pleasures, all Bitterness will vanish away: Ye will bewail the Calamities of Sion; but if the Comforter sent by the Son from the Father speak to your Heart, being made tender by Love, it will make you feel a Joy that passes all Understanding, together with a holy Sorrow, which draws Tears from your Eyes; so that ye will not change your Sighs and Tears, for Laughter and Triumphs of your Enemies.

The fifth
Effect. Divine Love recompences us for all our Losses.

I am very much afraid, O ye faithful persecuted Christians, that the principal Source of your bitter Sorrows,

the great Love ye have for your Temporal good Things. 'Tis a great Cruelty of which any one will be very sensible, to see himself robb'd of a good Estate, on which he had set his Heart, and wherein he had settled himself: But to sweeten the Bitterness which proceeds from this Source, nothing can be more useful, than the Meditation upon Love, wherewith I mean to entertain you. You have plac'd your Heart upon the World; it is Rooted here to your Unhappiness, and these are the wretched Roots which now cost you so much to cut up. Take off your Heart from the World, and force it from this Earth, when it meets with such a bad Soil; place it in God, where it will find a rich Soil, and Sweet, and where it will easily spread its Roots: As soon as it shall go out of the World it will enter into God; then we shall find that every thing is despicable in respect of God; then *will ye taste how good God is*, and how much better than every thing in the World which so much Enamours you. The World deprives you of your Country, your Houses, your Wife and dear Children; after all this remains with you: This is a good Remainder, and is more worth than all

all the Goods which have been taken from you, not excepting your Sanctuaries and your Temples, for which shed many Tears in Secret; not excepting even your Pastors, who have been taken from you, who have been Banish'd, Hang'd, and Broken upon the Wheel; for *the Lord is your Shepherd, and your great Pastor, therefore shall lack nothing.* Now, to render Divine Love an effectual Remedy, against the Sense of that Pain which is caused in you, by the loss of so many Things, nothing can be more serviceable than the Meditation which I now present you with; dwell then upon the Considerations contain'd in it, wherein you will find Motives to the Love of God. Meditate upon the Beauty, Goodness, the Majesty, the Holiness, and the other Attributes of that Being infinitely perfect: And if you enter upon these Reflections with a Devout Soul, I do promise you, that you will leave them with a Heart full of Consolation and Joy.

The sixth
Effect. Divine Love
maintains
the Hope of
Deliverance.

Ye still support yourselves with Hope of Deliverance; and I do not forbid you to make use of this Hope. God forbid. Ye have reason to Believe that *the Arm of the Lord is not shortened, that his Vengeance shall not always sleep,* and

that his Promises cannot be made of no effect; he will come and repay his Adversaries. Suffer not yourselves to be discouraged by the Examples of some Churches, which have been overthrown and were never rais'd up again. 'Tis much more reasonable to cast your eyes upon those Churches, which after they had been, as it were, reduc'd to Ruine, have been Rebuilt out of their Ruines by a kind of a Resurrection. These latter are much more numerous than the former; and for one Church which has been finally Destroy'd, there are a Hundred which have escap'd such Ruin. 'Tis just then, that ye regulate your Fears and Hopes in the plurality of Examples. The ancient Church endur'd Ten Persecutions, so many are Reckon'd; but we may reckon up many more, by adding the many persecutions rais'd by the *Arian* Emperors, and those that proceeded from the *Antichrist*, which for the space of a thousand or Twelve Hundred Years, have been as it were without Number, and without Intermission: Yet we scarce do see any of these Persecuted Churches, which have been entirely buried under their Ruines. God has always given them some Refuge and Aftergame:

Let

Let us not doubt but God has reserv'd us also some great Event, which will be a kind of Miracle. Now, in the Meditation of Divine Love, ye will also find that holy assurance of the future Triumphs of the Church. If we love God as we ought to love him, let us not doubt but he loves us ; and if God loves us he will not forget us : He will comfort and will not tarry. Love is the Foundation of this Hope ; If we love God with sincerity and ardour, we must necessarily have Hope ; for from the manner of our Constitution, Love finds us ways great Relief, in this Thought, That he, whom we have made the Object of our Love, is to be our Preserver, and that he esteems us as dearly as the Apple of his Eye. And although our Trust in God, which is the Fruit of his Love and ours, chiefly regards Eternity, and the Kingdom of Glory ; yet it excludes not Time, and the Reign of Grace. For at last his Love must triumph over the fury of our Enemies, and our Love to him is the internal Pledge of his faithfulness in his Promises.

The seventh Effect. Divine Love is that which alone procures internal Peace in external Disturbances.

In fine, the State wherein your afflicted Souls, is a true Tempest and a cruel Storm : But think with your

elves, that if ye were voluntarily to be tossed by excessive and disagreeing internal Motions, ye would augment your Misery, and the danger into which the Storm does cast you.

Thus internal Peace is absolutely necessary for diminishing the sad effects of the War ye endure without you. The People who bestir themselves too violently in a very small Bark, do infallibly help the Waves of the Sea to overturn this little Vessel; so that the only way to save themselves, is to observe as quietly as is possible, whither the Waves drive them, that they may always throw themselves on the other side of the Barque, to make a Counter-poise. Preserve therefore, if possible, a serious Sense of your Condition, that ye may study which way the Temptations of your Persecutors incline you, and take exactly the Counter-poise of that which they would obtain from you: This is to throw yourselves on the opposite side of the Boat, that ye may hinder its Sinking.

But to obtain this internal Peace, in which alone is all our hope of Escaping, remember that ye cannot find it, only in the Love of God. *Jonas* found himself soundly in the bottom of his Vessel, when

when it was ready to Sink. This was sleep *from the Lord*, whose Vengeance pursu'd him, because he fled from his Presence: But the faithful Soul sleeps in the bottom of its Vessel, when it is batter'd with a cruel Storm, and sleeps in the Bosom of its loving Saviour, and in the Arms of his Lord. 'Tis God who makes it to fall into this happy Sleep, which is no hindrance to its Christian Watchfulness: *I was asleep but my Heart was awake.* The sleep of *Jonas* was a sleep of Security, but the sleep of a faithful Soul is a sleep of Trust and Confidence. The sleep of the Lord Jesus in his little Boat, when it was ready to Perish, appear'd to be a deep sleep. But the Barque, with those who were in it, was in no danger; for this Boat carried the Lord of the World. Upon which account the Lord had good Reason to tell them, *O ye of little Faith, did you doubt?* Why do you say, *Lord save us, we perish*: Are not my Love and yours two Anchors more firm than the Heaven and the Earth? Ye love me and I love you: The Love I bear to you is it not sufficient to insure your Lives? And the Love which you have for me does it not assure you of that which I have for you? Can I fail to love those

to love me, since I lov'd you at a time when ye did not love me? *Herein is the love of God, that he first lov'd us, even when we were Enemies to him in our un-standings.* Thus 'tis Divine Love, and Divine Love alone, which can and ought to calm your Commotions in the very midst of a Storm.

This Divine Love, which is the Love of Charity, will it not put an end to all personal Resentments which ye have against your Persecutors? And by this means preserve your internal Peace, which is absolutely necessary for you, to sustain the external War in which ye are engag'd? You will see in this Parable, how the Divine Love is like a Painter; the Soul the Canvas and the Image of God, that bright and noble Picture, which the Eternal Painter draws upon Souls. But that the Piece may be well-Drawn, the Canvas, must be stretch'd, for otherwise he can never Paint upon it exactly. The great Sun of Righteousness forms his Image in our Souls, as in the clear Water of a Fountain; But the Waters of this Fountain must be calm as Ice, and firm as Christ; and this is that inward Peace which we seek after, and which is so necessary for you, to overcome your Tempters.

Part I. d and

and Temptations. The Holy Spirit, which will draw a-new his Image within us, will not fail therefore to settle you in the midst of your Commotions, and this he will do by the means of his Love.

This is enough to make you understand that important Truth, I have at present set before your Eyes; which is, That Divine Love, and the Meditation upon that Love, are the most effectual means which can be employ'd for the Consolation of the Souls persecuted for Jesus Christ, and for confirming their Courage. The Reading of the following Treatise will set this Truth in a clear Light, if ye approach this Sanctuary with pure Dispositions, with clean Hands, and purified Hearts. You will understand without doubt, at present, that when I undertook to Write on this important Subject, I did it with a design to Comfort, to Instruct, and Edify those who suffer with the Church, and for the cause of the Church.

Otherwise I should have thought that it was my Duty, and that a Necessity was laid upon me to Write to you often, to support you in your great Trials: But a long continuance of Infirmities, and other Impediments, have interrupted

rupted the course of our Pastoral Letters. Now I pretend to give you all at once what you have not receiv'd for many Years: For in Divine Love ye will find a Treasure of Consolations, which ye yourselves will judge to be inexhaustible.

Those who shall read this Treatise with attention, will easily perceive that the Author is not Ignorant in the Theology of Mystical Divines, and that he does not dissemble his consulting of them.

The Author
learn'd My-
stical Theo-
logy.

When I was Writing of Divine Love, I could not but hearken to these Doctors, who call themselves Masters of *True Love*: I read them therefore, but seldom follow'd them. Their thoughts brought others into our mind, which perhaps are much more worth: We are very far from engaging in Controversy, and from a wrangling Spirit, which is very opposite to a Spirit of Devotion: We content ourselves with correcting what we find Extravagant in this mystical Morality, and rectifying what is not sufficiently exact. Besides, we did not think it convenient to distinguish the *Quietists* from the ordinary Mystical Divines, for we did not find

them different enough to make two separate Bodies of them.

Pray with me for the Spirit of Light of Grace, and of Love; that he would bless this Work, and render it useful and acceptable to all pious Souls, to strengthen them in Vertue, and to all those who are not yet Pious, to inspire them with true Piety.

Pray also for us, my Brethren, ye chiefly, O holy Confessors of the Lord who suffer in the Gallies, and in the Dungeons, cruel Torments, and of long continuance. Your Sufferings and your Christian perseverance make us look upon you as the Priests of the Universal Church. Our Perfumes cannot be in better Hands than yours, to make them acceptable to God: Present therefore our Prayers to Jesus Christ our great High-Priest, that he may present them to his Father, and that this gracious Father may be pleas'd towards all.

I desire this assistance from you with so much the greater fervor, because it is the only Recompence which I expect for my Labour, and my good intentions to comfort my Brethren. I am going the way of all Flesh. I make an end where I began. I was
fin

first known by a *Treatise of Devotion*, which was found to be very acceptable to Devout Souls; and now I make an end with a *Practice of Devotion*, which without doubt will please no less, and perhaps more. Thus I take my leave of the Publick; this is the last Work that I pretend to Publish, and I am fix'd in this Resolution, that I will not Answer, but by Silence, those abusive Books which may appear against me. I do not abandon the Cause of God, but I return the Sword of the Spirit into other Hands; and I wish they may manage it more happily than I have done for the defence of the Truth. And as to the Injuries which may be done me, by some of those who pretend to be Protestants and Reform'd, I am still firmly resolv'd to follow the *Practice of Devotion*, as I have done for many years past; and so suffer the Torrent to pass by me, without ever casting my Eyes upon those Books, which may move such Passions as God does not approve, and Men rarely excuse. My strength is come to an end, not so much by the number of my Years, as by the number of my Labours: They were but moderate, 'tis true, but they were very far above my strength, because I did not proportion

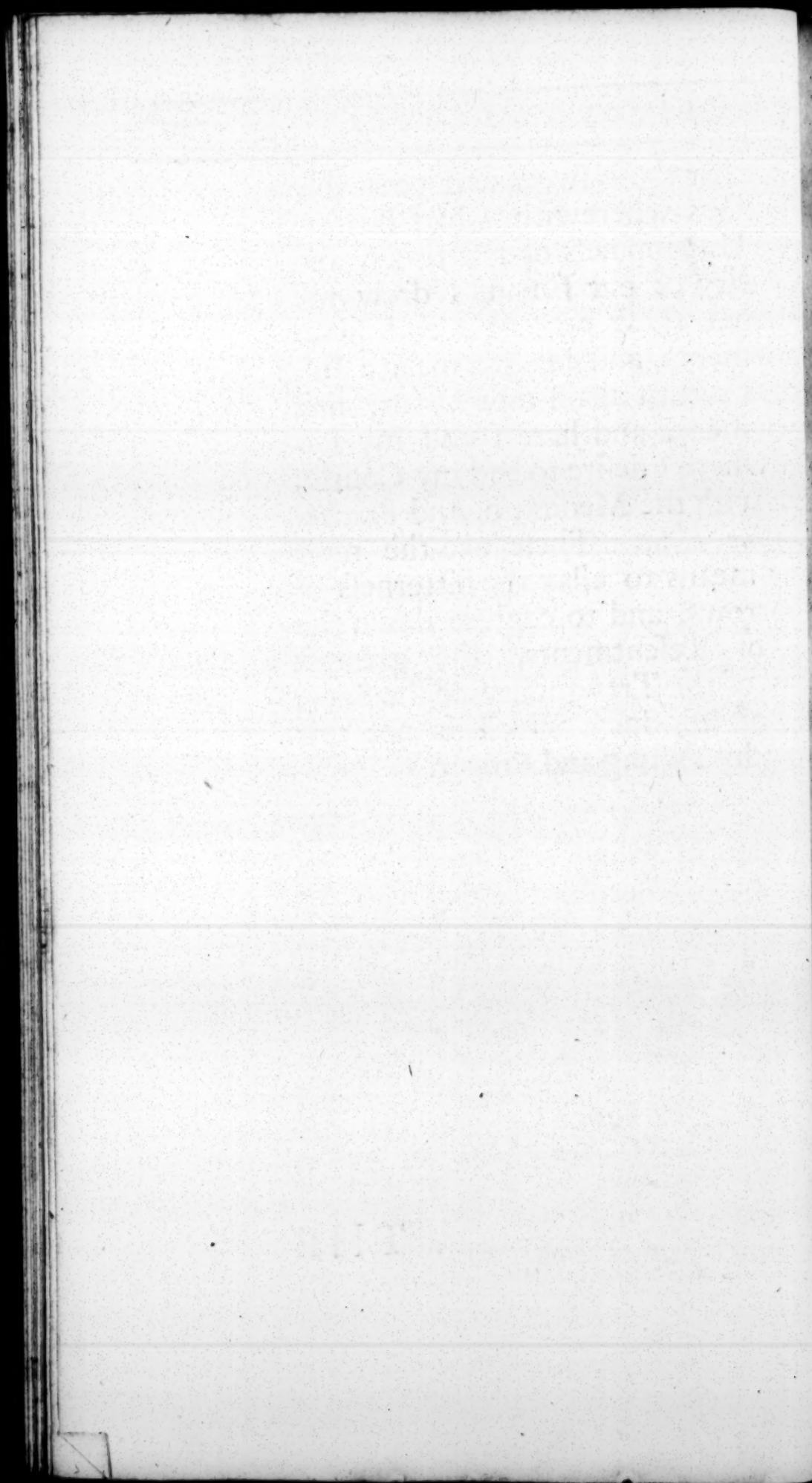
d 3

them

them to that little stock of vigour which Nature had bestow'd upon me. The Bishop of *Meaux* calls me somewhere an *Indefatigable Writer*: I take God to be my Witness, that it was not the desire of Glory, which engag'd me to Write upon so many different Subjects, in a little at a time. I know, that the Glory of an Author consists not in Writing much, but in Writing well. The fire of Persecution hath, and still does devour us, which will not suffer us to go on slowly, nor to speak coolly against those famous Authors, who have kindled the fire of this Persecution by their Reproachful Writings. Whilst our Enemies employ'd the Dragoons, the Swords, Prisons, and Torments, to destroy us, they did not cease to make War upon us with their Pens, to blacken us, that they might render us odious. It was not possible for me to abandon to so cruel an Injustice, a Church in which I was Born, and to which I owe my Christianity. Dr. *Arnaud*, the Jesuit of *Maimbourg*, Mr. *Nicol*, and the Bishop of *Meaux*, were enemies of God, of distinguishing a Quality, that they were not to be neglected; they were then to be resisted and oppos'd. If I had follow'd my own Inclinations, I should

not have left those sweet and peaceable
Meditations wherewith I had begun :
But the Unhappiness of the times, and
the Cruelty of our Enemies drew me
away from these peaceable and pious
Employments, and engag'd me in a Just
War. I return again now to my first
Employment, and here I end my La-
bours, where I desire to end my Course,
I mean with the Meditation and *Practice*
of *Divine Love*. These are the most
proper means to allay the bitterness of
our Sorrows, and to conjure down the
Devil of Resentments, the greatest
Enemy of the Tranquillity of the Soul;
and of evil Spirit which is not cast
out but by Fasting and Prayer.

THE



T H E

Practice of Devotion;

O R,

A T R E A T I S E of
D I V I N E L O V E.

P A R T I.

Of the Nature of Divine Love, and the
Motives which excite us to it.

*A Prayer of the Author for himself, where-
in he begs the assistance of the Holy Spirit.*

O My God, who dwellest in devour-
ing Fire, and in Light inaccessi-
ble, how shall I approach thee?
How shall I, who am of polluted
Lips and Heart, speak of so great a Subject
as that of Divine Love? I will be silent then,
until thou hast touch'd my Lips with a Live-
Coal from thy Altar. O Holy and adorable
Spirit, who art the Love of the most Holy
Trinity, and O thou Eternal Word, who
enlightenest its Understanding, come and open my
Heart.

Part I.

B

Heart,

Heart, assist my Imagination, suggest to my Thoughts, Words and Expressions, worthy of my God and my Subject. Suffer me not to debase a Subject so sublime, by the meanness of my Expressions. Shed upon my Thoughts, not a Fire of Human Eloquence but a Ray of those pure, holy and ardent Flames, which make the Seraphims; so that in the pursuit of these Meditations, my Soul may cry out through the violence of Transport: *Give me my Heart again, for I am Sick of Love.*

C H A P. I.

Two General Considerations concerning Divine Love.

THERE is a certain Operation in Chymistry, which is called *Precipitation*, that separates the grosser Parts of a Body, which is to be reduced to its first Principles, and precipitates them to the bottom. Human Love in matters of Morality, is the Agent which produces in our Souls this unhappy Effect. For Human Souls bearing the Impression of the Divinity, were created in Heaven; they were Pure, Celestial, Eternal, real, and consequently light: But when Sensuality and the Love of the World took possession of them, they became heavy. This wretched carnal Love is a Mass which precipitates the Heart to the bottom. What is it that cast down the Angels from that height of Glory

in which they were created? It was this unhappy and criminal Love; it was Self-love, which separated them from God. What was that made the first Man fall from on high? His Sin is called, *The Fall, the Fall of Adam*, in the language of the Church. And what was the cause of this Fall but Love? viz. the Love of the Earth, the Love of Concupiscence. Our Love therefore is an Angel cast down from Heaven; and the great difficulty is to remount it to the same place where it was at first: This is our great Work, it is that which is called the first and great Commandment, and is the principal part of our Duty.

Morality distinguishes two kinds of Love, *Love Ascending*, whereof one is call'd, *Love descending*, and the other, *Love ascending*. Love descending resembles those Torrents, which throw themselves headlong from the tops of Mountains; it dashes itself against the foot of a Rock, and then divides into a Hundred Rivulets, whereof some run to the right hand, and others to the left. Upon which account this Love is an inconstant and wandering Love, which makes a circuit round about the Earth, and is pour to all sorts of Objects, but never finds rest in any place. It runs always until it has reach'd its Ocean; and this Ocean is Death, and the bottomless Pit. In them the Man himself perishes with all his famous Designs; his Desires and his Love follow after him, and become his Executioners and his Torment in the other World, after they have been deceiv'd by his Idols, because having never been satisfy'd, nor fulfill'd in the time of this Life,

they produce in Eternity an eternal Thirst which is always devouring and consuming him. The wicked Rich-man desires only a drop of Water, but a River would not cool his Tongue, nor allay his excessive Heat.

Love ascending takes a quite contrary course: It mounts upwards, it ascends like flame, it burns, it purifies; it flies toward Heaven, and draws its subject along with it. But that it may ascend happily, it must be in a calm Air; for the violence of Winds, and agitation of Passions, dissipate and extinguish it. Such is our Love! a poor Fire! naturally languishing, and which is easily stifled amidst the Impurities of our Souls. The obstacles it meets with in its Ascension, make it vary and shift from one side to another. It must therefore be well-directed, that it may not wander from the right Path; and these Directions are what thou enquirest after, O faithful Soul, and which I will now endeavour to give thee. Come, follow me, O God, draw us, that we may run after thee.

A Meditation and Prayer.

O MY Soul, wilt thou never understand how horrible a thing Sin is? Consider it with respect to the Mischief it has done thee. Thou wast in thy Original an Angel before God, a Seraphim that liv'd in the Bosom of his Love, and by this Love enjoyed an infinite Glory. But this Monster, which is call'd Sin, pluck'd thee out of the Bosom of thy God, and thrust thee down to Hell, and now makes thee basely creep upon the Earth.

O my God, have pity upon thy poor Creature, which desires to be found in thee, in thy Love, and in possession of thee its Sovereign Happiness. Make it to ascend out of that bottomless Pit into which it is fallen. I endeavour as much as I can to return unto thee, who art my Sun of Righteousness, the Fountain of my Light, and the Principle of my Motion. But all these Endeavours will be to no purpose, unless thou take me by the Right-hand, unless thou assist my Ascension, and lift me up to thyself in a Chariot of Fire and Love. Come therefore, O my God, Come. To thee be eternal Glory, Dominion and Power. *Amen.*

C H A P. II.

Of Divine Love, what it is: A General Idea of this Vertue.

TH E first step we ought to make in order to the attaining of any thing that is good, is to get the Knowledge of that which we desire; for how can we desire that which we not know. We must therefore, at the entrance into this Treatise, define the Love of God, and form to ourselves some Idea of Love in general is nothing in effect the Will itself. Wherefore God does never command us to Love in general, for he were all one, as if he should command us to see, to hear, to will. It is sufficient that he hath given us Eyes, Ears and a

'Tis not possible for the Soul to be without Love.

Heart, for we naturally see, hear, and will. Love is nothing else but an effusion of the Soul and the Will, which cometh forth of itself, and scatters it self among such Objects as appear to it capable of making it happy. It has been said a Thousand times, that all the World would be happy ; from whence I conclude, that all the World *loves, and ought to love.* For Love is an Action of the Will which seeks its own Happiness and Sovereign Good : And therefore the principal Care and Design of Christian Mortality, 'is only to guide the Soul and the Will in the choice of the Object of its Love. For 'tis as impossible for a Man to live without Loving, as for a Man to live without Breathing ; and indeed Love is the Respiration of the Soul. This is the first stroke of the Pencil, which gives us a Rude Draught of the great Portraiture of Divine Love : But this Draught is nothing yet but a Shadow.

Love is all the Passions.

I shall now present you with a Second Thought, which will advance us one step further : And it is this, That all the Passions of Human Nature are in effect nothing but Love, which assumes divers Names, from the different circumstances and views under which it considers the Object. Thus, when we love a thing that is absent, and want that which we love, our Love is called *Desire*. When we possess what we love, our Love is call'd *Pleasure* and *Joy* : When Love sees its Object afar off, it is call'd *Hope* ; when it has quite lost the sight of it, 'tis call'd *Despair* ; when it has still a slight view, and has not quite lost the sight of it, 'tis call'd only *Sorrow* and *Sadneſs*.

When

when it sees the Enemy that wou'd deprive it of its beloved Object, 'tis call'd *Anger*; but if the Enemy succeeds, and Ravishes from it that which it loves, it becomes *Rage* and *Fury*: If any would share with it in the Possession of what it loves, then Love is call'd *Jealousy*. We shall see hereafter, that this general Thought agrees to Divine Love; for if Human Love is all the Passions, Divine Love is all the Vertues, as we will call it after *Austin*.

All this is yet too general to give us a sufficient Idea of Divine Love; we shall come nearer to this Idea, if we say, That Love is the *Desire of Union*; I mean, Divine Love. 'Tis true, that the Wisemen of the World do thus define Human Love, which is nothing else but a Passion: But 'tis remarkable, that Christian Vertues assume the names of Human Passions. So *Faith* in its Original signifies *Credulity*, or the Credit we give to the things which are told us, and taught by Men. *Hope*, which is commonly a Passion very foolish and vain, gives its name to one of the most excellent Christian Vertues; to that Vertue which supports a faithful Soul in the midst of the greatest Storms. Thus it is as *Love*, which is a foolish and blind Passion, and yet it gives name to the Queen of all Vertues. And Christian Vertues do not only agree as to their names with Human Passions, but they agree also in those Idea's which are call'd General, or as the School calls them *Universal*. From whence I conclude, that the Vertues are nothing else but Sanctified Passions; Passions elevated above themselves,

Love is a desire of Union.

Passions well-govern'd, and well-directed. This may serve as an Apology for the Passions, against those severe Philosophers, who would wholly extinguish them in their Wise man.

Divine Love is an ardent desire of being united to God.

Seeing therefore, that Love in general is a desire in the Person Loving, of union with the Person *Beloved*, I do not see, why we may not be allow'd to say, That Divine Love is the most ardent desire of the Soul to possess God, and to be united to him in the most perfect and most intimate manner. It may be objected perhaps, That the Love of glorified Souls cannot be a desire of Union; 1st, Because all desires, even those that are most Lawful, have something in them that is gratifying and opposite to Happiness: Upon which account the supreme Happiness is defin'd by Cessation of Desires, *Desideriorum quies*. 2dly, This appears to be inconsistent with the State of the glorified Saints; for they see God, they enjoy him, they possess him, and are perfectly united to him, and therefore they do no more desire him; nevertheless they perfectly love him.

How the glorified Souls do still desire an union with God.

To remove this difficulty, we must remove an ambiguity in the Terms. The Soul loves the Object of its Love, and union with that Object, even when it has obtain'd and possesses it. The *desire of union*, and the *love of union*, are in effect but one and the same thing. 'Tis true indeed, we do no longer desire to obtain, that which we have already but we relish it: But then this pleasant relish necessarily includes a desire of Possessing it always; a Jealousy and fear of losing

and a constant care to preserve the Possession of it. I mean, that all these Acts are not distinct and explicite in a glorified Soul, tho' they are really there. Such is the Happiness of the Saints in Heaven: They are united to God as much as is possible; they relish this Pleasure, and drink large Draughts of it. They are enamour'd of God, and charm'd with their Happiness, and by the great Pleasure they take in it; they never cease to desire, that this advantage may continue with them Eternally. This is one difference between Human Love and Divine: Human Love dies in the Enjoyment, because in the Enjoyment is found the Death of a Man's desires; and the Pleasure cannot be seen, when there is no more desire. Whereas, to love God, to possess, enjoy and desire him, are so far from being inconsistent, that they are inseparable. But this Subject must be handled again in the following Discourse; and therefore 'tis no wise necessary to insist longer upon it in this Place, where we are only giving a general Idea of Divine Love: There wants no less than a compleat Treatise to discover the nature of this Love. However, by Discursing of the Motives, Excellency, Degrees and Acts of Divine Love, we hope to give a most compleat and perfect Idea of it. But before we begin to represent these Motives, we must at least give to Devout Souls a small Taste of this Love, that they may see, at least in general, whither we intend to lead them.

Medi

Meditation and Prayer.

O My Soul, thou may'st perceive by Reflexion, the true Cause why thou findest so little solid Pleasure in the love of the World, and the Creatures. Love is a fire of union, and the union which follows desire is sweet, proportionably as the Object itself is pleasant and delightful. All the Creatures are cloath'd with Thorns and Briars; they tickle those who slightly pass their Hand over them, but they pierce those who Embrace them closely. They please, and may be useful to him that Enjoys them, and does not excessively Love them ; or, as St. *Austin* expresses it, to him who uses them and does not Enjoy them ; but they wound those Souls who Embrace them with an ardent Affection. O God, thou hast Thorns for the Impious and Wicked, whom thou pressest between the Arms of thy Wrath, and who find themselves pierc'd with the sharp points of thy Vengeance. Such thou hadst for thy Son, thine only Son, who being pierc'd with the Arrows of thy Justice, cry'd out, *That his Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death*, Mat. 26. Thou hast such for thy Saints, whom thou would either Chastise or Prove. But the Thorns are changed into Roses ; and the Pleasures which faithful and Devout Souls find in their union with thee, are inconceivable to any who has not tasted them. Wherefore we conceive but little, what we ourselves shall say about them ; for we speak of that which we have neither seen nor felt. B

Father of Grace, who art the inexhaustible
Fountain of Pleasures, encrease in my Heart
thy Taste, which in me is no more than a
Taste. Make the whole torrent of thy
Pleasures, those inexpressible and glorious
to enter into my Soul; that so I may
know, *See, and Taste, how good the Lord is.*

The Motives and Reasons of Divine Love.

The First Motive.

His Beauties and Infinite Greatness.

C H A P. III.

God is Light without a Figure.

is a Truth generally receiv'd, and main-
tain'd by an Experience as certain, as the
continuance of the World to this day, viz.
that Beauty is the Load-stone of Love. Car-
love is allur'd by corporeal Beauties; and
spiritual Love by the Beauties of the Soul.
Greece being assembled at the Olympic Games,
employ'd their Eyes only to admire Themisto-
And in this place, where the Vanity
the Greeks had gathered together all the
alluring Shows, nothing was enticing
the Beauty of this young Hero, who was
Handsomest Man of all Greece. 'Tis no
matter

Beauty is the
Load-stone of
Love.

matter whether these Beauties be real or parent only ; but such there must be, to enter the Heart and put it into Motion. A Heart which is deluded by the Object of its Love ascribes to it all lovely Qualities ; and does it, partly to justify all its Excesses and Extravagances. That which it Loves is always the most Beautiful, the most Accomplish'd, and the most perfect Object in the World ; and yet most frequently the contrary of all this is true. This oblig'd the Poet to Paint Love to us as a Blind Infant, and a blind Infant which takes pieces of Glass for Diamonds, and a Blind Infant which sees not the Deformities and Defects of that which it Loves.

Divine Love is neither an Infant, nor Blind : It is no Infant, because it is the sovereign perfection of grown Men : It is not to be found in Infants, but it puts them into a State of perfection. This Love is perfectly well-skilled in Beauty : It is not only incapable of being impos'd upon by these gross illusions, which take Deformities for Beauties, but it has a fine and delicate Taste, to discover with the greatest niceness the different Degrees of Beauty and Goodness : And when it contemplates God, with an attentive and Religious Mind, it discovers in him infinite Beauties.

God is Light,
Original
Light, without
a Figure.

First, It composes the Idea of the Divine Beauty, of all those Features, which God has attributed to himself in his Holy Scriptures, or which his Saints have ascrib'd to him when they spake by the Inspiration of the Spirit, which perfectly knows all the excellencies of God, because he is in God, and is God himself.

Self. Undoubtedly Light is the chief
Beauty of the sensible World, without it no-
thing is Beautiful, and tho' it were all alone
it could not cease to be Beautiful. Upon
this account, the Sun, the fountain of this
Beauty, was generally ador'd by all the Pagans,
as the greatest of their Deities. The Holy
Scripture cannot forbear to set before our
eyes the Beauties of God under these Terms,
Light, the Sun, the Rays. God is to us Psal. 84. 11.
and Shield ; the Lord is my Light, the Psal. 16. 12.
is my Portion, and this Portion is my Psal. 97. 11.
for Light is sown for the Righteous : 1 Tim. 6. 16.
dwelleth in Light inaccessible ; he is the Fa- Jam. 1. 7.
of Lights : God is Light, and in him is no John 1. 5.
Darkness at all.

Wherefore, O my Soul, take good heed
that thou imagine that there is a Figure in
these Expressions, as if God were not really
truly a Sun, and a Light. He is alto-
gether as essentially a Sun and Light, as he
is Substance, and an Intelligent Substance :
the Sun and all Luminous Bodies are no-
thing but Figures of God ; so far is God from
being a Sun, and a Light only in a Figure.
The Creator has established two great Ima-
ges in the World, one for the Intelligible,
the other for the Sensible World. God
is Light which knows and thinks : He has
set the Image of Light in the Sun ; and
the Image of Thought in Angelical Spirits
and Human Souls. The Sovereign Beauty,
among extended Substances, is Light ; and a-
mong Spiritual Substances, the chief Beauty
is Thought. Every Body that shines by its
Light, is admirably Beautiful, tho' it
has

has no Thought ; and every Substance
Thinks is admirable, tho' it has no Light.
Let us consider then, how beautiful, excellent,
and admirable, a Being Sovereign and
perfect must be, in whom these two Beings
of Light and Thought, being both Supreme
and Infinite, are united together. Strain
your Thoughts to the utmost extent upon
Deity, and you will find no Idea of him more
Just, than to conceive the Infinite Substance
of God, as present and assisting in all that
call'd Space, Place, or Extension ; and
Substance actually Luminous, as well as
Thinking. It is the fountain of all the Light
in the World, and the Origine of all our
Thinking Faculties. It would be altogether
as extravagant to say, that God is not a
Soul and a Light, but only in a Figure, as to
say that he is not a Thinking Substance, but
only Figuratively. From whence thinkest thou
O my Soul, will proceed the Transports
of those Spirits, who shall be one day perfectly
united to God : Doubtless they will arise
from hence, That these pure and holy Souls
shall be swallow'd up in God as in the Fountain
of Light. In the Paradise of Glory there
will be neither Sun nor Moon, and yet
glorified Bodies can no more be without
sensible Light, than without Soul and Motion.
There will be no more Sun, but God himself
will be their Sun. He will then shed about
that sensible Light, which he now suppresses
and whereof he now shows us only the Image
in created Light ; he will be then
Light, a Light mild and benign, and which
will be perfectly agreeable to the faculties
Blessed

ed Spirits ; a Light which will not offend
Organs, as the Light of the Sun does ;
Light which would now devour us, but
not then consume those who shall be
ers'd into it ; as it is plain, that a Body
h should be plung'd into the Sun, would
the twinkling of an Eye be consum'd and
lv'd, by the rapid Motion of the subtil
ter that composes it. Do not desire me
ve you a more distinct Idea of this Light ;
inaccessible as Saint Paul informs us.
cannot be perfectly defin'd but by know-
t, and it cannot be known but by ap-
ching it ; and no Sinner can approach
ithout being consum'd by it. But when
ontemplate this infinite Light, thro' the
inous and shining Veils, which it has
ad before its Rays, we see it well enough
now, admire and love it. It seems to me
lless to amass together more general
ms of Scripture, to represent to us the
ty and Greatness of God ; this word
nt may suffice us. But it would be much
er, O my Soul, that thou should'st dive
ar as is possible, into the knowledge of
Eternal and Infinite Light, to inflame
Love.

A Prayer.

My God, my Sun and my Light, thou
art the Light of Souls, and as soon as
turnst away, the Heart is immers'd in
found darkness. Pierce therefore, O
d, all these Clouds which beset and envi-
me, O thou Eternal and Original Light ;
pour

pour into my Heart those Celestial R
which enlighten and quicken Souls. O
of Righteousness, arise upon my *East*, stre
forth those Wings which bring Salvat
that I may be made a new Man, restor
sanctified and quicken'd. To thee be E
nal Praise thro' all Ages.

C H A P. IV.

*Five Principal Features, which compose
Divine Beauty.*

THE Beauty of Human Creatures con
in the comely and beautiful conform
tion of their Parts, *i. e.* Of their Features
and in that which is call'd *Symmetry*,
The due concurrence of these Features, wh
they are well-proportion'd, and well-un
to one another. The Beauty of God is li
wise compos'd of grand Features, and
Proportions. The Features which comp
the Beauty of God, are what the Script
calls the *Divine Attributes*, his Wisdom,
jesty and Power; his Life, Constancy and
variable Duration; his Immutability, Ho
ness, and all the other Divine Perfection
which we conceive as Qualities; Of wh
we have but little to say, and only so m
as is necessary to make us understand, t
they compose a Subject infinitely Beautiful

Of the Maje-
sty of God, the
first Feature of
Divine Beauty

Majesty is so essential to that which ou
to be call'd Beautiful, that no Creature
be said to be Beautiful, but only so far as

Majestic. It cannot be defin'd what Majesty is, only 'tis very well known, that 'tis something I know not what, which commands reverence by imprinting Love. 'Tis a lustre which proceeds from the Mien, the Behaviour or the Eyes, from which sometimes there shines such a Brightness as cannot be endur'd. The Divine Majesty is the Original of all created Majesties: And the Scripture represents it as such to us, that the Seraphims and chief Intelligences, being unable to endure its splendor, are oblig'd to turn their Eyes towards the Earth, and to cover themselves before God. Majesty is an Air, which the Sovereign Authority displays Externally: How great then must the Majesty be of him, that possesses a Sovereign Power over all the Creatures in the World.

Power therefore follows Majesty, and Of Power ;
 makes a part of Divine Beauty. There is ^{the second}
 nothing more beautiful or great, than a Being ^{Feature of}
 which, without moving itself, communicates motion to all Spirits, and to all the ^{Divine Beauty}
 parts of Matter ; a Being which makes the
 Creatures which are Deaf and devoid of Ears
 hear his Commands and Orders ; a Being
 which commands Death, a Monster without
 eyes, and it Obeys ; the Grave, and it Opens,
 scatter'd Ashes, and they Re-assemble ; the
 scattered Spirits, and they come out of the
 places which were assign'd them, and rejoyne
 in their Bodies: A Being which has power even
 over *nothing* ; so that when he Commands,
nothing Obeys, and it yields Creatures of
 excellent Beauty : A Being, in fine which
 makes things, only because he will have them

to be ; and indeed makes them by willing them, *for he spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast*, Psal. 33. By saying *Let there be Light*, Light was presently produced. In the Works of Creation, Preservation, and the Government of the World we must understand, that nothing comes out of God ; that all is done by an Act of his Will, and one Act only, whose fecundity is inconceivable, since it produces an infinite number of different Effects. If a Prince sitting upon his Throne, without acting, speaking, or commanding, without Officers or Springs, should move all the Engines, and all the Wills of a large Country, we should believe him to be a God, and a Being absolutely perfect, it would be just to believe so. 'Tis certain that this Reflexion, above all that can be made, gives us the greatest Idea both of the Divine Power and its Infinite Excellency.

Of Wisdom;
the third Feature of the
Beaury of God

Wisdom ought necessarily to be join'd with Majesty and Power. A Being so powerful as that of which we now speak, which should not have Wisdom, would be a most terrible Being, the most monstrous and most unworthy of our Love that can be imagin'd. The separation of these Attributes of *Infinite Power and Wisdom*, is so unconceivable and contradictory, that to know that God is infinitely *Powerful*, is sufficient to convince me, that he is infinitely *Wise*. This were sufficient that I should have nothing else to oppose against the Discourses of these profane Wits, who say Wisdom and Holiness will always prefer what is Honest to that which is Profitable.

But

But God having made choice of such a World as we now have, wherein Sin and Confusion bear Dominion, in stead of a World perfectly regular, and adorn'd with all Ver-
e, has prefer'd the former to the latter, because he found it most for the Interest of his own Glory, and so he has violated the
re Laws of Wisdom and Holiness. These unhappy Objections, that would destroy the
ea of the Divine Beauty, which we are now
quiring after, deserve doubtless to be well
nsider'd, that we may find out the means to
litate these Suspicions, which are made
e of to darken the Light, and obscure the
ternal Beauties of the Divinity: But if we
ve any thing to say of them, it cannot be
one at present.

We shall therefore for the present content
rselves with perceiving clearly by way of
nsation, the infinite Wisdom of God,
hich makes one essential part of the Divine
auty. Let us contemplate this profound
isdom in the structure of the Universe,
hose Parts are so Beautiful and so admi-
bly dispos'd: Let us consider it, in the
otions of the Heavens, which are so re-
ar and so rapid; in the Revolutions both
the Stars, and of the Seasons, which pro-
ce the Riches, Beauty and Fruitfulness of
e Earth; in the innumerable number of
lestial Fires, which roul about our Heads
hout any Confusion, preserving always
e same Order; in the Globe of Light,
hich is the great Image of the Divinity, in
e Sun, the source of all Light and Fruit-
ness. Let us consider this Wisdom, in

these Parts of the World which are call'd Sublunary, in the Air, in the Region of Meteors, of Storms and Rains, of Thunder and Lightning. God is in all these things and wheresoever he is, he appears to be infinitely Wise.

Let us consider this Wisdom in that which is call'd the little World, in an Human Body, whose Parts are compos'd and order'd after such a manner, as ravishes a reasonable Man, and confounds those profane Wits, who would fain deny a Providence, and attribute all these things to Chance. They maintain that the Use of the Parts does not proceed from the design of an Intelligent Cause : *e. g.* the Feet were not made for walking, nor the Eyes for seeing, nor the Ears for hearing, nor the Mouth for speaking, nor the Stomach for digesting, but Blind Nature, having made these Parts without any design, they happen'd very luckily to be fit for those uses, to which they have always been applied from the first formation of these Machines and Organs. I will not say, that he who falls into this Error must have a mind inconceivably blinded, but certainly his heart must be incredibly deprav'd ; and yet this Paradox is tolerated in a Christian Country.

In fine, let us admire and contemplate this Wisdom, in the great multitude of Events which Providence dispenses : Events wherein the Wisdom, Justice and Goodness of God ; his Patience and infinite Power equally shine forth ; his Justice in the Punishment of so many wicked Men, who foolishly

later receive the just Chastisement of their crimes ; his Goodness who makes the Sun to shine upon the Just and Unjust ; his Charity, who distributes so many favours to his Enemies ; his unconceivable Patience, who suffers often the Wicked to enjoy the Inheritance of the Righteous, and to usurp those good things which God created only for the Saints : In fine, his infinite Power which preserves the World, notwithstanding that infinite number of Disorders, which in all appearance would quickly throw it into the deep Abyss of nothing.

But is there any Wisdom without Holiness ? Would God be an infinite Beauty, if he were not infinitely Holy ? O my Soul, be fully convinc'd of this Truth, that of all the attributes which compose the Divine Beauty, this is that which God loves best, and of which he is most Jealous. Besides, this is a nature of Beauty, which is most suited to thy Capacity ; this Majesty creates in thee reverence, his Power terrifies thee, his profound Wisdom is the Object of thy Admiration ; but there is as it were, nothing in these for thee, nothing for thy Imitation. If thou would imitate the Majesty of God, thou wilt make thy self ridiculous ; as these princes do, who render themselves invisible to God, that they may be the more revered by their Subjects. Such was that little king, who would be carried in a Chariot of brass, that he might imitate the Thunder ; such was the foolish *Nebuchadnezar*, who caus'd a Statue to be made of pure Gold, of prodigious bigness, on purpose that it

Of the Holiness of God ;
the fourth
Feature of
Divine Beauty.

shou'd be ador'd. Such are these proud Princes, who by saying, *I will, we will*, endeavour to imitate the Sovereign Divine Power, who alone has right to say, that a Thing was made for this Cause only, because we have Commanded it. If thou wilt imitate the Divine Power, thou wilt always fall short, and thy weakness will cover thee with shame and confusion. If thou would imitate the Wisdom of God thou wilt do well, but thou cannot imitate this Wisdom but by imitating his Holiness ; for no Action can be wise, which is not Holy, Pure, and agreeable to the will of God. He has often told us, *Be ye Holy, for I am Holy ; be ye Perfect, as our heavenly Father is Perfect*. He has Heralds who continually proclaim his Glory : But he has appointed the Seraphins, Heralds of a Superior Order, who cry incessantly in the vast Arches of Paradise, *Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts*. He calls himself the *Holy one of Israel*, and that is the name which he prefers to all other. God is terrible in Hell, glorious and majestic in Heaven ; powerful in Nature, merciful in Grace ; but he is Holy every-where. 'Tis true, that his Holiness does chiefly appear in the Sanctification of his own People, and therefore it is written, *The Lord is Holy in Sion*, Psal. 97.

Of Eternity ;
the fifth Feature of the
Divine Beauty.

These are the principal Features of the Beauty of God, to which all the rest may be easily reduc'd : But there is another Beauty which transcends all these Beauties, and infinitely encreases the greatness of them, and that is Eternity. 'Tis unspeakable how much Eternity encreases the value of all Things,

Things, whether they be good or evil, beautiful and great, or deform'd and mean. The deformities and pains of Devils and damn'd souls are horrible and frightful, were it only upon this account, because they are Eternal. There are created Beauties, who have great charms indeed; but they have this Essential defect, that they are not Eternal: And upon this account they are only apparent Beauties, they are Dreams which pass away and vanish; they are Shadows which have nothing solid; they are the sources of delusions to vain Minds and worldly Men, who run after these Shadows, without ever attaining the Happiness they seek after.

In the Intelligible World there are Beauties Created, which are nevertheless Eternal, such as shall never have an end. Such are the Celestial Intelligences, the Angels and Archangels; such are also the glorified and sanctified Souls. They have some Rays of the Divine Beauty: *Thou art beautiful, O my Love*, said the Eternal Lord to his Divine spouse. But these Beauties are neither perfect, nor truly Eternal. 'Tis true, they shall never have an end, and they see before them infinite Ages: But they have left behind them an Abyfs, which hath neither bank nor bottom, which is call'd the *Eternal nothing*; and they have no being but as they come forth out of that Abyfs of nothing, in which they were nothing, and out of which notwithstanding the Divine Power created them: But the Eternity of God is preceded and follow'd with Abysses; such as the Abysses of Glory and Duration, of Greatness,

ness, Strength and Beauty. The Divine Beauties never had a beginning, neither shall they ever have an end, and because they are Eternal, they are Beauties always new.

This, O my Soul, is a very imperfect draught of the Beauties of God : But such as it is, it may serve to kindle in thee the first of Love to him. Gather all these Features together into one, the Light, Majesty, Infinite Power, Sovereign Wisdom, Unspotted Holiness, and all these Eternal ! Admire the proportion and happy union of all these Features together : See how the Infinite Light of God makes his Sovereign Majesty : Admire how his Majesty necessarily supposes Infinite Power : Consider how this Power and Majesty are happily united with Wisdom and Holiness, to compose together the Original source of all Beauties. Here thou wilt find the first Motive of thy Love, the Motive of that Love which is call'd disinterested : For altho' there should be nothing here for thee, it would nevertheless be true that this is the greatest and most beautiful Object that can be presented to the Mind. Herein thou wilt find the foundation of that Love, which is call'd the love of Knowledge. Thou wilt see, that of all Objects, God is the most worthy to be consider'd, contemplated, admir'd and Lov'd.

A Prayer.

O My God, are these Words or Things which I have just now read and pronounced ; Are they the effusions of my Heart

of the mere products of my Author's Imagination? Am I touch'd with this Divine Beauty, whereof I have now read, and of which the Picture has been given me: I tremble when I enquire into this matter; I dare not descend into my own Breast, for fear lest I should find there what I seek not for. O Infinite Beauties, O Eternal Beauties, discover yourselves to my Eyes, that I may see you, that I may know and love you. Be not to me, O my God, any longer a God that hides himself. Draw aside the Veil, which hides from me more than the half of these Beauties and Excellencies. My Soul, thy Spouse, hath sought thee in the night Season, it hath knock'd at thee thro' the lattices of the Window, and thro' the hole of the Door]: her Bowels have been mov'd within her. She rose to open to thee, and to receive thee into her bosom; but she did not find thee: For, O my God, thou hidest thy self from thine own Children. Thou hast made it an inviolable Law, none shall see my face and Live. Thou dwellest in a place inaccessible by the Sons of Men. Yet I will say without intermission, with thy Ser-
vant Moses, Make me to see thy face; at least thou wilt make me to see thy back-parts, and thou wilt cry before me, *I am the Lord, gracious and merciful, ready to pardon, slow to punish*. Thou wilt make all thy Goodness pass before me, reserving to me the view and possession of all thy Beauty, for that happy age, wherein after I have put off this gross and earthly Body, I shall be cloth'd upon with my House which is from Heaven, where I shall see thy face in Righteousness, and shall

shall be satisfy'd with thy likeness. To thee the Eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory. *Amen.*

The Second Motive of Divine Love.

C H A P. V.

Of the Goodness, Gentleness, and Beneficence of God.

LET some Men say as long as they will that the Excellencies and infinite Beauties of God, are more than sufficient to inflame us with love to him ; this is not true. If God were not good aswell as beautiful, it were impossible that any Creature should love him. What Obligation would it have to its Creator ? He did indeed give it being by creating it out of nothing ; but having never made it sensible of any effects of his Goodness, it must of necessity be miserable and infinitely miserable. God then would not have drawn it out of the Abyss of nothing, but as it were out of a deep Grave where at least it was secur'd from all sense of Pain : He would only have made it sensible that it might feel Eternal Misery, or at least an Eternal privation of all Good, which is an infinite Evil. We must therefore consider God as good, we must know and taste his Goodness, to the end we may love him. The view of the Beauties of God being alone, can only

only produce Admiration: And this does not agree to Saints only; for the fain Angels in their deep Abysses, know God and his Excellencies better than we do; they admire him, and yet they do not love him.

Christian Morality divides Divine Love into two Branches; the first is call'd *the Love of knowledge*, and the other, *the Love of acknowledgment*. The first is founded on the Beauty and Goodness of God consider'd in himself; and the second proceeds from the sense and experience we have in ourselves of God's Goodness with respect to us. Now this love of acknowledgment, is so much the first mover

The Love of knowledge, and of acknowledgment.

of Souls, that the Machine and its Wheels cannot be put in motion but by this Spring. If it an Imperfection, I'll grant it; but whatever it is, Man is certainly thus made. Moral Philosophy defines Good and Goodness, by being communicative of it self. 'Tis that according to this Idea, God must be Sovereignly good; for he Communicates himself to all, and thro' all, and by ways infinite for number, and incomprehensible for manner. And for this Reason he ought to be infinitely lov'd, both for the good we receive, and for that we are to receive from him, by Acknowledgment, and by Hope. The good things we receive can much less be reckon'd up than the Moments of our Life; we live not one Moment, which is not filled with many benefits. Thus the favours of our God are heap'd up in our life, and cannot be kept distinct; for each effect of the Divine Bounty could not find a place distinct and separate from the rest: *In him we live*

A general Idea of the Goodness of God.

Our infinite
dependence
upon the
Deity.

AA. 17.

live and move, and have our being. " To understand how much we owe to God upon the account, 'tis necessary that we form a clear and distinct Idea of our dependance upon God. Let the Impious and Profane laugh as much as they please, at that which Divine Revelation tells us, *That preservation is a continued Creation*, it is nevertheless true: Neither does it follow from hence, as they say, that we are every Moment changing our Substance, and that our Soul to day will not be the same as yesterday; for the meaning of the Divine Power is only this: That the same Power which produc'd us out of nothing, preserves us from falling back into nothing again. A strong hand which supports a living Man above an Abyfs, and hinders him from falling into it, does it not give him every Moment a new Life? It exerts the same strength which it would exert, in drawing him out from the bottom of the Abyfs. No less power is requisite to hinder a Creature from being annihilated, than was necessary to produce him out of nothing. This is what the words of St. Paul signify, *In him we have our being*, and also, *in him we move*. Thus all that is called motion, sensation, pleasure, joy and taste, all this comes from God. Now see, O my Soul, how much thou owest to God, who preserves thy being every Moment, making thee already relish new Pleasures, or the same Pleasures being continu'd with thee. This is a Truth, I say, which we ought very carefully to mind, *viz.* The infinite dependence we have upon a Being infinitely perfect: Because we love Independence, and would

would fain persuade ourselves that we owe the good things we enjoy to our own powers. We are link'd to God by delicate visible Chains; and so we believe that we walk without him, at the same time that he sustains us. The Pipes thro' which he conveys the Influences which produce in us the motion, and the Pleasure which arises from them, are so fine, that our gross Eye cannot perceive them. *My God is a God that hides himself*, Isai. 44. O my Lord, thou liest hid behind the Creatures, and wrapt up in second Causes: I find in these second Causes, Bread, my Wine, my Garments and clothes: And as thou reprov'd thy ancient people, because they run after their Lovers, their Bread, Wine and Oyle; so do I make pretences of all thy Instruments: I offer Injustice to them, as if they were the true Causes of my Happiness. Nevertheless 'tis certain, my God, that thou art the Soul of the world, who does all things, and gives me all things. We think we attribute much to God, when we look upon him as our Father, who has given us being and birth; and we persuade ourselves as much as we can, that after he has sent us into the World, he leaves us to walk and act by our strength, and according to our own Inclinations, like those fathers, who not chastising their Children while they are young, have no power over them, after they are arriv'd at such an Age as emancipates them from the Rod. But it is quite otherwise in the Case between God and his Creatures, for God is a Father who always begetting thee, and who is careful to

to hold thee always by the Hand, that thou mayst be able to walk without stumbling.

All men have an Inclination which is almost invincible, to *Sacrifice to their own Name and burn Incense to their own Drag*, as the Prophet *Habbakuk* speaks, Ch. 1. 16. They say *mine own Arm hath sav'd me, and my Fury hath sustain'd me*; my own prudence and skill in management, my Industry, my Friends have procur'd me my Advancement, and placed me where I am. There is scarce any opinion of mankind, which more displeases God than this; for this is to rob God of his Goodness, to divest him of his Glory, and substitute ourselves in his Empire: This is to break the Chains, whereby we are link'd to God: this is the first step to the blackest of all ingratitude. The wiser Pagans made a right Judgment in this Case: So *Plutarch*, who has preserv'd to us the Memory of that *Athenian* Captain, who return'd from a Campaign, which he had been very successful, tells us that when he gave an account to his Master of his Actions, at every great Action which he repeated he always added, *In this fortune I have no share*: Now Providence, which in effect is nothing else but Fortune, being extremely offended at the Discourse of this Insolent Man, abandons him for the future, and ever after he prov'd the most unhappy Man upon Earth. Learn then, learn, O ye Mortal Men, that ye owe all to God, and let no Man glory in his Wisdom or in his Strength, but let him that glorieth, *glory in the Eternal God and in this, that he believes him to be Eternal*. Jer. 9.

The

There is no greater Temptation, than that which inclines Men to look upon themselves as the Authors of their own good success: this being a Sin which is infinitely offensive to God, there is none against which he has provided so many Remedies; for his Providence, on purpose to convince us of our weakness, suffers us every Moment to fall on our Face: And then we are apt to say, God did not sustain me, God did not bless me. Besides, he has given us in the holy Scriptures a Thousand express Declarations, to make us sensible of our nothingness, of our dependence upon the first Cause, and our inability to do the least thing by ourselves: For not only *David* tells us, *Psal. 127. Except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain: But he hath attributed to himself all that we ascribe to second Causes, even with the exclusion of the second Causes, that we may learn not to look upon them as the Causes of our good or evil success. There is no King sav'd by the multitude of an Host, a mighty Man is not deliver'd by much Strength: An Horse is a vain thing for victory, Psal. 33. O faithful Soul, oppose these notions as a Buckler, against the profane Gallery of worldly Men, who say that God prepares himself always for the greater Army against the lesser; for this is false! 'Tis indeed, he often makes second Causes successful, according to their natural force and strength; for he hath appointed them to the execution of his designs. But then he sometimes when he pleases, with a few as well as with*

Proofs of our infinite dependence upon God, as to the Goods of Nature.

with many; and many times he scatter strong Armies with a few small Troop Ten Thousand *Grecians* kill'd Two Hundred Thousand *Persians*. The small Armies of the *Israelites* put to flight the numerous Armies of the *Syrians*, the *Medianites*, and the *Philistines*. Read the whole Sacred History, and you will see that it is rather a History of God's Actions than of Men's. *The Armies of the Almighty hath done this.*

If we be thoroughly persuaded of the Truths, we have already pay'd one part of what we owe to God. According to the Laws of Acknowledgment to confess and own a favour, is to repay it: And then we are in the nearest disposition to love God upon the account of his Goodness; for the faintness of our Love proceeds only from the want of a lively Idea of the Beneficence of God.

The Goodness of God prov'd from the benefits of Grace and Glory.

After we have consider'd the Goods of nature and fortune as the gifts of Heaven, we now reckon up the benefits of Grace, our Soul will lose itself in the Calculation of them, and at the same time will be inflam'd with Love for its Benefactor. We will find among these benefits, the Remission of Sin, the gifts of the Spirit, the Christian Virtues, the hope of a future Life, the advantage of a Holy Perseverance, the Crown of Paradise which follows immediately at the end of the Perseverance. If we enter into Paradise and the Sanctuary of God, we shall see that these torrents of Milk and Honey of which we are to Drink, those delicious Dishes whereof we are to eat, the Table of our Lord shall be fill'd

the Honour we are to have of sitting down at Table, not only with the Patriarchs, Prophets and holy Kings, but with our Saviour himself, who has told us, *Mat. 26. I will not henceforth drink of the fruit of the Vine, until I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of Heaven.* We shall there see all the Saints, and above all the Holy of Holies, and in seeing him we shall possess him, we shall taste him. *We shall see his face in Righteousness, and shall be satisfy'd with his likeness, Psal. 17. We shall drink of the River of his pleasures, and shall be fill'd with the fatness of his House, Psal. 36.* In the possession of so great favours thou wilt say, *O my Soul, How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God, therefore the Children of Men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings; for with thee is the fountain of Life, in thy light we shall see Light, Psal. 36.*

After these Reflexions upon the gracious effects of God's Goodness, cast thine Eyes upon Eternity, which so many times doubles the greatness of them; for these immense benefits which shall never have an end, are of such a relish and weight as knows no bounds: Upon which account *St. Paul* tells us, *That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compar'd with the Glory which shall be revealed in us, Rom. 8. 18.* This is true as to the advantages, as well as misfortunes, as to the good things as well as evil, of this Life, That none of them is to be compar'd with the glory of Paradise. He that view it and return'd from it, tells us, *That they are unspeakable things, which it is not lawful for a Man to utter, 2 Cor. 12. 4.*

We must consider the Goodness of God in Jesus Christ.

All this is not yet sufficient to know the Goodness of God in its full extent. We must ascend to the Springhead, to Jesus Christ the Eternal Son of God ; we must see him Born in a Stable among Beasts, we must consider him as he wander'd about in the World without any Support, without Honour and Glory, being Persecuted, Reproach'd, Stoned and at last Crucified. We must look upon this Divine Jesus, as dying between Thieves, expiring in horrible Pains : We must view him in the Garden at *Gethsemane*, overwhelmed under the severe hand of God, and from a sense of his Pain uttering these doleful words, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto Death. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?* It was his Love, O my Soul, which reduc'd thy Saviour to this sad condition : His design was to procure and merit for thee, all the benefits I have just now mention'd. If the Jews, notwithstanding their Infidelity, perceiv'd the Love which Jesus Christ had for *Lazarus*, by his Tears, saying *See how he lov'd him*, John 11. Shall not thou perceive, O my Soul, the greatness of the Saviour's Love, from those Tears of Blood which distill'd from his Feet, his Hands, and his Side pierc'd with the Spear ; from his Head, pierc'd with Thorns, and his Skin torn with the Lashes of a Whip ? He shed also Tears of Blood from all parts of his Body, in that Sweat which was produc'd by the greatness of his Agony.

After these Reflexions, O my Soul, wilt thou not confess, that God seems to have given thee the Commandment of loving him

only to make thee asham'd, and tacitely to reproach thee for thy hardness of Heart and ingratitude? Is it necessary to command a Mother to love the fruit of her Womb? Is not this plainly enough to accuse her of being an unnatural Mother? Should one condemn a Wife to love a tender Husband, who had done her the Honour to make her his Bedfellow, to communicate to her of his Goodness, his Riches and Greatness; this would be enough to give her to understand that she was an ungrateful Spouse, and unworthy of so great favours: So certainly we ought to take to ourselves confusion of Face, because God found it necessary to command us to love him.

The Soul's Elevation to God, and Return to itself.

O My Saviour and my God, why didst thou command me to love thee, since thy great Benefits force me to do it? Can I choose but love him who first loved me, who prevented me by the Bowels of his Mercy, who every day and every minute gives me surprizing and tender marks of his Love? Whither wilt thou go, O ungrateful Soul, but thou wilt find the tokens of the Love and Goodness of God to thee. If thou mount up into Heaven, thou wilt see the Angels ministering Spirits, who are commissioned to serve for thy Salvation: If thou descend into the Region of the Stars, thou wilt see there the Sun, Moon and Stars, which are order'd to pour upon thee their benign

Influences, and to put all the Causes in Motion which are for thy Service. If thou come down as low as the Air, and the Region of Meteors, you will find there the fructifying Showers and fruitful Dews. When you come even to the surface of the Earth, you find it cover'd with Corn, and abundance of the fruits which nourish and delight thee. If at last thou pass from the World to the Church, thou wilt see there a Thousand effects of Divine Goodness: Nay, if thou descend into Hell, thou wilt there see the Love of God in its full extent; for the same Pains which will create in thee a Horror at the sight of them, will make thee pay a profound Acknowledgment to him, who stop'd up the ways that would have led thee thither, in which thou wast engag'd. O my Soul, attend to the powerful Voice which proceeds from all these places, and from all these Creatures, and which cries aloud to thee, *Love thy God with all thy Heart and with all thy Soul.* O my God, suffer not the Light of so great obligations and benefits to be Eclips'd to me, and forsake my Eyes: Render these Objects not only present, but make them piercing, that I may always live in the Transports of an amorous Acknowledgment.

C H A P. VI.

The Devout Soul ought to find a Motive of Divine Love, even in the Afflictions which God sends upon it.

THE heart of Man, which has a Thousand ways to escape out of the hands of God, and to refuse him its Love, will tell us, That all these fine reasonings are only for those on whom God has heap'd his favours: but that there is scarce any room to solicit that Soul to this love of Acknowledgment, who drinks Wormwood every Morning, all whose days are days of sorrow, and whose nights are cloudy; in whose way God *lies in wait as a Lyon and a Bear*: A Soul that has no reason to say, *My pain is heavier than the sand of the Sea, it is such as I cannot bear.* When Providence proceeds so far as to take from a Soul, not only all worldly Comforts, but also deprives it of, and denies it all Spiritual Consolations; insomuch that a faithful Man is oblig'd to say, *Mine Eyes weep and melt into Tears, for he that should restore my heart is gone away*: Where are then the effects of this boasted Goodness? Whereupon must I find my love, when I receive nothing from God but marks of his hatred?

Alas, If none but happy Men were actually to love God, how few would the Lovers be? All worldly Men do already excuse themselves from this Love, and how prodigious is the number of these worldly Men! What are the Elect and Devout Souls in

Afflictions and the Deprivation of Comforts.

Lamentations. Job.

Happy Souls! ought not to be the only Lovers of God.

2 Kings.

comparison of them? A small flock, a handful of People, who appear when compar'd with the Camp of the *Syrians*, but as a little herd of Goats: And among these faithful, how few are there, who can call themselves happy, and the favourites of Heaven, if no favours must be reckon'd but such as are sensible? It will be found, that the Deity, the chief, or rather the only Beauty of the World, is without Lovers, or at least it will have so few, that we shall be ashamed of their small number. Thou must therefore, O faithful Soul, understand, That thou art no less oblig'd to love God in the hardest Afflictions than in the softest Prosperity.

God owes us
no Favours.

We shall hereafter show how far this disinterestedness and a disinterested Love ought to be extended: In the mean time possess our Souls with this Truth, That you owe all to God, and that he owes nothing to you. *What hast thou that thou hast not receiv'd, and if thou hast receiv'd it, why dost thou boast?* And if thou hast receiv'd it for nothing, as a pure free Gift, why art thou angry with him who deprives thee of it, after he has given it?

God is always
Beautiful,
and always
Amiable.

At least thou cannot, thou ought not, O my Soul, ever to cease from rendering to God, that Love which we call the love of Knowledge. He is no less perfect in himself than he was before that thou wast miserable. He is beautiful, and his beauty is Eternal and consequently invariable; and thou wilt always find in that infinite Beauty something wherewith to feed thy Love. Although he should cease for some time to be good to thee,

et he is good to a Thousand and Thousand Creatures, who are for the most part ungrateful, tho' they are daily loaded with his benefits.

But so far are afflictions from being a reason why thou shouldst not any longer love God, that on the contrary they are a strong motive to kindle and heighten thy Love. Men build, and believethemselfes firmly establish'd, upon their worldly Supports, their Credit, their Wit, their Friends, Riches and Greatness, their Dignities, Employments and Crowns, and say with those that are mounted on high, *I am a Queen, and shall see no sorrow.* How often does it happen, even to those Souls that are well-beloved, that they give themselves over to this Security. But God being jealous of that Homage of Confidence that is due to him, cuts up by the roots the foundations of this Security. They think that they are built upon a Rock, but they find it to be only Ice harden'd with the sharp cold of Winter, which melts with the first Rays of the Sun. Thou seest these wretched Foundations of thy Confidence, Glory, Greatness, Friends, Riches and Fortune, to melt under thy Feet; what then does Prudence require of thee, even the Prudence of this World? But that thou seeing thyself suspended in the Air, without any support under thy Feet, should strongly and quickly lay hold upon the Rock of Ages, and him who alone can preserve thee from the Eternal Misery of falling into that infinite Abyss, which thou seest underneath thee, and round about thee. Who then does

All support
vanishes in
affliction, except that of
Divine Love.

not see, that thou art more oblig'd to embrace God with an ardent affection, in Affliction, than in Prosperity? Thou thinkest when the times are favourable, that thou canst live without the Love of God and his Protection: But in the midst of thy Sorrows and Miseries, thou ought to be possessed with a deep sense of thy own weakness, and confess that thou art even nothing before God. That there is nothing therefore but his Love that can recompense thee, and be serviceable to thee, when thou art universally forsaken by the Creatures.

The Chastisements of God are marks of his Love.

But to cut off all Reply that may be made by the Flesh, we must inform it, That these Afflictions which it looks upon as Interruptions of the Love of God to the Soul, are nevertheless the exercise of the purest Love in God. Harken to him who tells thee, *My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth,* Heb. 12. 5, 6. This is not one of these Evangelical Paradoxes, for which 'tis necessary that we enjoy ourselves submission; but this is an experienc'd Truth, a Truth that is even confess'd by those who find it most bitter; a Truth supported by the Authority and Practice of all good Fathers: God *chastiseth and scourgeth* The Prison, the Gibbet, the Cross, and the Wheel, are for such Criminals as are not to be corrected but put to Death; but the Rod and Chastisement are for Children, even for those Children that are well-beloved, who are design'd to live. God Scourges us, and

does not deliver us over into the hands of the Executioner. *He chastiseth thee with the rods of a Man.* There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to Men; and God will with the temptation provide a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. 10.

Unhappy flesh, which cannot understand, that God can strike, and at the same time spare him whom he strikes: Tell me, from what principle thinkest thou, that God does strike and chastise thee! Is it from a Spirit of

God can have no other cause of his Chastisements but his Love.

impatience for the Injuries thou mayst have done him, by the unfaithfulness of thy Love: dost thou not see with what patience he endures the Affronts of the Profane, the Libertines, and in general, of worldly Men: will not he who endures with patience the blasphemies of the Wicked, much rather bear with thy murmurings, thy coldness, thy faintness in his Service, if he had not regard to some other Interest besides his own: dost thou not see that he strikes thee, that he strikes thee to be reveng'd upon thee, that he strikes thee? A fine Revenge indeed, for an Eagle to take upon a Fly? If he had a mind to take vengeance, would he take it as he does? Has he not Thunder to crush thee, Flames to devour thee, an Hell to throw thee into? But instead of this he makes use only of such Cauteries as are common among Men. You will say, they are long, lasting, and also painful. But hear what I have to say on the behalf of God.

Is not this to love thee, to endeavour to make thee conformable to his Son, the Son of his Love, the Object of his tenderest Affection? God chastises us only because he loves us.

Affection? Thou art smitten by God ; so was thy Saviour: He was smitten to such a degree that his Soul was seiz'd with an appearance of Despair ; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*, said he, Matt. 27. 46. Thou art very happy in that the Eternal Father has predestinated thee by these Afflictions to be made conformable to the Image of his Son, Rom. 8. 29. Is not this to love thee, to endeavour to make thee pure and clean ? And what are these Afflictions whereof thou complainest but the Purgatory thro' which God makes thy Love to pass to purify it. But thou hast no need of these Purifications wilt thou still being pure enough already. If thou art unhappy as to entertain this proud thought thou wilt deserve for this Pride alone, that God should withdraw his Spirit from thee and leave thee to go on in the way of those Crimes which lead down to Hell. *that is pure, let him be purified yet more and more.* Let him who has the vanity to think that he does no more stand in need of the purifications of the Rod, be still more and more try'd by the Rod, until he cry out with a Spirit of sincerity, *now I and my people are Sinners*, Exod. 4. 3. Is not this to love thee to endeavour to make thee stout and courageous, and brave, to possess thee with a contempt of the World, and an ardent love of Heaven ? And what can produce in us these dispositions and qualifications but the Rod of the Almighty ? Where do we learn to be strong, where do we acquire courage but in the Combates ? If there wanted the General of an Army, would you go to seek for one gilded

led Palaces, among Women, and all the
asures that effeminate Souls? Would you
e a Man who had never seen a Battle but
History? No surely, you would go and
e one among those who are said to have
n brought up in the School of *Mars*. O
worldly and effeminate Souls, God would
e stout and brave Champions, he makes
m such in his School, and he loves them
ause he has made them such. 4. Will we
er understand, that *God chastises us for
profit, that we should be partakers of his
ness; of his holiness, the greatest of all
lings; of his holiness which he so much
ems his Honour; of that holiness, which
he fairest flower in his Crown; Lastly, of
t holiness, which is the Subject of those
rnal Songs, wherewith the holy Spirits,
Angels and Seraphins make the habita-
as of Glory to resound, saying, Holy, holy,
is the Lord of hosts*. Is not this to love
e? Can thou complain of the ways in
ich God leads thee, since he makes them
ng thee to infinite Honour?

But seest thou not this Love of God in the
anner wherein he chastises thee? 1. He
chastises thee with gentleness, and always
proportions thy Afflictions to thy Strength :
he encreases thy Afflictions, he encreases
his Assistance. Look upon the Martyrs,
o endur'd dark, deep, stinking Prisons for
ny Years; who went thro' Fire and Wa-
endur'd most cruel Tortures, and died
er such Torments of such a length, as
almost without bounds, and of so great
as scarce can be conceiv'd and imagin'd:
Did

The Love of
God appears
from the
manner where
in God chas-
tises thee.

Did God love these great Saints, or did he hate them, because he suffer'd them to fall into, and expire under the hands of the Executioners ? Did he not give them the measure of an infinite Love, in supporting them under these Troubles, which would have made the Heroes of the World to Succumb ? Beseekest thou not also the Tokens of the Goodness and Love of God, in those Spiritual and Internal Consolations, wherewith he furnishes thee abundantly ? One moment of Divine Consolations, is more than years of Human Temptations. Yes, will you say, but God does not furnish me with these Consolations ; my Soul is terrified, and I cannot sleep night and day, *What is become of thy Grace, why hast thou forsaken me ?*

O faithful Soul, a God that hides himself, does not therefore cease to love ; his Bowels are moved for thee, even in those minutes wherein he seems to be as hard as a Rock. *Hos. 11. 8, 9. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? How shall I deliver thee, Israel ? How shall I make thee as Admah ? How shall I set thee as Zeboim ? Mine heart is turn'd within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not Man, the holy one in the midst of the people, and I will not enter into the City.*

A Prayer and Meditation.

O My Soul, banish therefore that foolish and cruel Thought, That God does not love thee, because he strikes thee, and

consequently, that thou art no longer oblig'd
to love him. The Lord is great, the Lord
is good, good even to thee in the midst of
the most cruel Pains. *It is good for thee that
thou hast been chastised by him, that thou might
learn to walk in his Laws.* For before this thou
took no care to walk in his right ways? 'Tis
therefore, that the Afflictions which
the Lord has sent upon thee, are a new motive to
love him. Alas, O my Saviour and my God,
forgive me all those blows which I cannot
bear. I find my sense is weak, and I am
in need of great Tryals. But if it be thy
will that I suffer, let it be under thy hand,
and not under the hand of Men, against
whom I am apt to be angry, and then I of-
fend thee by mine anger. However it be,
after whatever manner thou art pleas'd
to try me, give me not only Patience, and
a Spirit of Submission and Resignation, that
I may say, *'Tis the Lord, let him do whatsoever
he pleases*; but a Spirit of Love, to love him
constantly in the midst of Flames, if thy Pro-
vidence should throw me into them; and that
I may find in the exercise of thy severe Mer-
cy the depth of thy infinite Love, and thy
will to purify me, to the end thou mayst
produce me into that place, where nothing
impure and defil'd can find Entrance.
Thee, holy Father, most holy Son, and
Holy Spirit of Holiness, be Glory, Empire
and Power, thro' all Ages.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

*To excite our Love to God, 'tis necessary
know his goodness by Taste and Sensation*

ALL the preceding Reflexions are absolutely necessary, to make thee know O my Soul, the infinite Goodness of thy God and to kindle in thy Heart a Love to him. But then thou must know, That the goodness of God, may and ought to be known two ways by way of Speculation, and by way of Taste and Sensation. To know God and his Goodness by way of Speculation, you need not to have an understanding, a little sharpness of Wit, and to make use of them: And not only wicked Men, but even the Devils themselves can know God after this manner. How many learned Men are there, who having learn'd the Art of thinking and ranging their Thoughts in good Order, speak so magnificently, of God, of the Love and Thankfulness which his Goodness should produce in us, yet without having a Taste of what they say. This is because they rest in Speculation. We have two noble Faculties, the Understanding and the Will. There are also two properties in God and in all his Actions, Truth and Goodness. Truth is the Object of the Understanding but Goodness of the Will. The Understanding knows the Truth, and searches after it; the Will loves Goodness and adheres to it. God draws us to himself by all the Considerations that can tie our Souls to his Divine Essence.

and these *Cords* are called *Grace*, preventing *Grace*, efficacious *Grace*, and victorious *Grace*. The operations of this *Grace* are applied to the Souls of the Elect. By these two means it presenteth to our Understanding revealed Truth; and this view produceth Faith in the Saints: But *Grace* doth not stop there, He that says that *Grace* does nothing but convince the Understanding, and after this the Will does necessarily follow the Judgment of the Understanding, has very wrong notions of Human Nature, and does not understand the ways of *Grace*: For *Grace* must proceed further, and draw the Will by a new Operation. We know but too well, that one may be convinc'd of the Truth and Goodness of God without loving Him: God therefore must come and frame Devout Souls, that which they call the *affections* of *Grace*, which are certain *arms* that conquer the Will, and which we are able to overcome all our Resistance. This is a Delight which is called preventing, that Joy of which St. Paul says, *That it is with all understanding.*

The Holy Spirit distinguishes very nicely between two ways of *seeing* and *feeling* the Goodness of God: *O taste and see that God is good,* . 34. But first we must *see* and *contemplate* the unquestionable proofs of the Goodness of God; and then advancing further we *taste* it: Taste how great is the sweetness of this benign and merciful God. O faithful Soul, 'tis by this last way that thou shalt be thoroughly persuaded, that God is infinitely good, and worthy to be infinitely lov'd

lov'd for that Goodness. Thou wilt find Thorns in the way of Speculation, and ever Shelves on which thou mayst Split: For those who are call'd great Wits, *i. e.* the Libertines, and impious Men have laid many Stones of stumbling in this way of Speculation. What proof have you, will they say, That the general Principle that made all things is one Good God? Does he not do much more Evil than Good? For one Man that he Saves he suffers Ten thousand to Perish; Is this the part of a Good God? He made choice of one Nation to be his own peculiar People, and neglected all the other Nations of the Earth. Had it not been much better to extend his saving Grace to them all indifferently? He suffers an infinite number of Creatures to be tormented in Hell for all Eternity, whom he might have satisfied and Save, or at least annihilate. How can this be reconcil'd to infinite Goodness? Enter not, O my Soul, upon all these profane difficulties: 'Tis true, that the Scripture and Reason will furnish thee with Arguments to oppose against all these Monsters. The Scripture will tell thee, that God is a free Agent, and may do with his own Goods what he pleases. That these Creatures did wilfully destroy themselves, and have no Reason to complain of God, that he deny'd them the assistance which was necessary to know and love him. They will inform thee, that those Creatures which are so ungrateful, cannot to forget and hate their Benefactor, cannot suffer any pains that are too severe. The Scripture will tell thee, that if God ought to exercise

his Goodness, he ought also to give a free course to his Justice. Reason and Piety will also furnish thee with other Thoughts: but the Flesh and the Seeds of Infidelity, which we carry about with us in the bottom of our hearts, will never be silent.

You can never silence them but by the way of Sensation and Taste. If God is harsh and severe to others, will you say, what is that to the purpose, does this hinder him from being good to me? I see him, I feel him, I taste him. He opens in my Heart a Spring of Consolations. *His love is sweeter than Wine.* Cant. 1. & 2.
He brought me into the Banqueting-house, and his Banner over me was Love. His left-hand is under my head, and his right-hand embraces me. Psal. 119.
He speaks to my Soul according to my hearts desire, and saith unto it, my Daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee. He produceth in my Soul more than those have, who have found great prey and plenty of gold and silver: His words are sweeter to my palate than the honey and the honey-comb. His word is a light unto my feet, and a step unto my paths. He calls me lovingly, and tells me, Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden and I will refresh you. Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and buy wine and milk without money. Come, and I will satisfy you with the fatness of my house. Knock and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be open'd unto you. My well-beloved came to me by night, but because I refus'd to receive him, he went away, and now I have lost the Taste of his Consolations. But I awak'd myself to Repentance: I run after my well-beloved, Cant. 3.
I sought him during all the nights of my anguish:
 Part I. E. I

I sought him and found him, and I would not let him go, until I brought him into the chamber, where that conceiv'd me; my well-beloved is mine, and I am my well-beloved's. This is a part of those Transports of holy Love, which the possession of God produces by the Taste and Sensation of his Goodness.

Cor. 5. 13.

I know that all this will be look'd upon as Vision and Fanaticism by the great Wise of the Age, who believe themselves to be wise, and the only Wise-men. But the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of Men. I would rather pass for a fool among the Saints, than be one of the greatest sense among worldly Men. *If we be blessed ourselves, it is for God.* 'Tis sufficient that tender and devout Souls understand and relish us.

We must procure to ourselves the Taste and Sensation by holy Meditations.

But they will ask me; Must I expect the Taste and Sensation of the Goodness of God merely from his Grace? Is there nothing to be done by me to excite it in me? Know faithful Souls who study Devotion, that in this Case, as in all other parts of your Duty you must not expect God with your Arms a-cross; but you must go forth to meet him if you can possibly. Reading, Prayer, and Meditation, are the necessary means to excite in you the pleasant Sensation of the Goodness of God, which produces Divine Love. Tho' we prefer the way of Taste and Sensation, for knowing the Goodness of God to that of Speculation, we do not therefore intend wholly to exclude Speculation, but to teach thee, O my Soul, that thou must be sober and circumspect in thy Speculation.

and to pass swiftly over the mouth of these
Abysses which thou may'st meet with in thy
way.

When we lay down the way of Taste as
that which is most pleasant and certain, we
include in it Reflections, and a distinct At-
tention to all the several effects of the Di-
vine Goodness, which we have before explai-
ned. We must many times and often review
these Motives : And chiefly the reading of
the holy Scripture, and of those places
in which there is most Unction, is absolutely
necessary ; there we find the Goodness of
God in its source and its rivulets: This is the
Torrent wherein the thirsty Soul quenches
its Thirst ; here the Goodness of God is seen
in its clearest light ; but we must approach
this Sacred Book with devout dispositions,
with an humble and submissive Spirit, and
then we shall not fail to find there the Sacred
Fire of which the Saints do speak. *Did not
our hearts burn within us, when he expounded to
us the Scripture ?* Luke 24. *My heart was hot
within me, while I was musing the fire burned ;
And when spake I with my tongue,* Psal. 39. The
faithful Soul, which would be devout, ought
also to support itself by reading works of
piety, and to make choice of those wherein
there is most Unction, composed by those
persons whose life corresponds with their
recepts, to the end we may be sure, that
the Unction, is an effusion of an Heart fill'd
with the holy Spirit and with Fire. In fine,
prayer is an effectual means to bring us to
the Taste and Sensation of the Divine Good-
ness. For if God distributes the pleasures

of his Love to any, 'tis to the humbled Souls who lie sighing at his feet, and who bring forth in his presence such sighs as cannot be express'd.

A Prayer.

MY Lord and my God, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee ; but alas, I feel that my Love is languishing ! O thou Spirit of fire, thou holy Spirit, who kindled the Sacrifices of the Patriarchs and Prophets, and reduc'd them to Ashes, come and descend into my Heart ; this is an Altar of Stone, and of unhewn Stone, like that of *Elias*, it is loaded with corrupt and rotten Wood, and unclean Water : O thou Spirit of flame consume both the Wood and the Water ; the Stone and the Victim, that I may burn with Love and Zeal. And to the end that I may love thee perfectly make all thy Goodness pass before me, make me to taste how good thou art. The Taste of the vanities of this World, deprives me of the Taste of thy Goodness. The Carnal delights of *Egypt* hinder me, from being sensible of the ineffable Pleasures of thy Grace. Stifle therefore the unhappy Taste of the Pleasures of this World ; make me to know that they are false Pleasures and real bitterness ; make me to *taste the good heavenly gift the hidden Manna ; the Rivers which make glad the holy City.* Let my Taste be the foretaste of Eternal Life, and the happy forerunner of that inexpressible and glorious Joy, which

the sight of thy face, and the possession of thy infinite and eternal favours will produce in me. To thee, my God, my gracious Redeemer, be honour and glory through all Ages, *Amen.*

C H A P. VIII.

Some new Considerations which will serve as Motives to Divine Love.

The First Consideration.

The Soul finds no rest but in God.

WE have viewed the two grand Sources from whence we may fetch Divine Love, *viz.* The Beauty of God, and his Goodness. We shall now make some Reflections to improve these Motives, and redouble their influence.

And first, We observe that every Soul that seeks the Object of its Love, seeks the place of its Rest; for without study or reflection every one is full of this thought, that we shall never have pleasure or joy until we meet with that he Loves, which is certainly very true. And upon this account we find the amorous Spouse of Jesus Christ thus expressing herself; *By night I sought him whom my soul loveth; I rose and went into the streets and broad-ways; I sought him, but I found him not. The Watchmen that go about the City found*

me, To whom I said, saw ye him whom my soul loveth? I was transported when I heard him speak, I called him, but he gave me no answer. The Watchmen that went about the City found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keeper of the walls took away my veil from me, Cant. 3. & ch. 5.

O happy *Fiction*, which describes to us so lively and so naturally the Transports of a Soul full of God, inflamed with his Love; which despises the contempt of the World, and is raised above all human Considerations. A Maid arises by Night, she runs after her Lover, she enquires after him of all she meets with: She is cover'd with a thin Veil, she passes thro' the Night-watch, which is planted in the High-ways; they take her for an unchaste Woman, they tear her Veil, they beat her, they wound her, but nothing can stop her. Modesty indeed forbids her such a Behaviour, but Love pushes her on. Such are the motions of Souls, which are enamoured of the Son of God. They pass thro' all Things, they despise Honour, Goods, Riches, Reputation and Rest; they pass thro' Fire, Flame, Torrents, and thro' the most cruel and disgraceful Torments, and never cease till they have found out their God. Then they say, *I have found him whom my soul loveth, I have found him, and I will not let him go.*

The Soul that Loves is always in motion like a Rivulet which continually runs thro' the Vallies, and a-cross the Rocks, until it has found its Ocean, which is the place of its Rest. O ye worldly Men, ye are witnesses of this Truth; for your Life is a perpetual agitation, you seek the Object of your Love, and

and you find not the place of your Residence. My God, you have made us for yourself, and our Heart will never be at Rest until it is possesst of thee.

In the love and possession of God are the greatest Pleasures: *His mouth is most sweet, and he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved,* Cant. 5. As much therefore as you love Rest and Joy, so much ought you to love God, who alone can give you this Rest, and fill you with Joy. O thou spark of fire separated from thine Element, follow thy Nature, and never Rest until thou be rejoyned to thy Centre.

A Prayer.

TIS in vain, O my God, for me to exhort my Love to mount up to thee, unless thou draw it. My Soul is a flame which is always in motion, but it is a motion which makes it pass over the mouth of Abysses, and into deep Places, where seeking for Rest it will find Death. O Father of Mercy, have Pity on it. Suffer not the Waters of the Abyss to extinguish that little flame, which is a Ray of thy Divine Essence. Suffer it not to take Rest anywhere but in thy Bosom. To the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be Honour and Glory through all Ages, *Amen.*

C H A P. IX.

The Second Consideration.

God alone can render thee Love for Love.

Reason requires that we should love that which can love us : For common sense dictates to the simplest People this Maxim, which is common in the mouth of the Vulgar, *That Love ought to be paid with Love again.*

He that loves his Dogs and his Horses, his Palace and his Treasures, what receives he from them ? nothing. To love such Bruttish and Senseless Things, is meerly to throw away our Love ; for neither do they feel the Pleasures of Love, neither can they make their Lovers sensible of them. At least we should love the Creatures that can love us. Expose thy Love to Sale, to the highest Bidder, and surely God will carry it. You may love the reasonable Creatures which are capable of loving you : But remember that you weigh every thing in the Ballance. You may love the reasonable Creatures capable of loving you, which yet will not love you. How many such ungrateful and insensible Souls do we find ? Those whom thou lovest have Charms for thee, but thou hast none for them ; and this must give thee great trouble and vexation, to find that thou lovest without being lov'd again, which of all things

in the World is the most difficult to digest. Thou wilt find reasonable Creatures which will love thee; but then 'tis only with a love of Interest, their Love will last no longer than they can get by you, and immediately it will cease, when there is no more gain to be had. Other reasonable Creatures will love thee perhaps sincerely; but this Love will be always very imperfect and changeable. Love God and thou wilt find no *perhaps*. I will not say, perhaps he will love thee; for certainly he will honour thee with his Love, with a Love that is pure and disinterested, which is only for doing the good, and not for any profit or advantage he expects from thee. He will love thee with an eternal Love, *for whom he loveth he loveth unto the end*, John 13. He will love thee with an unchangeable Love; *For he is the Lord who changeth not: He is not as a Man that he should lye, nor as the Son of Man that he should repent. He is the father of lights, in whom there is no shadow of turning*, Jam. 1. 17. *i. e.* He is a Sun without a Tropic. The shadows of the Sun of this World vary; sometimes the Sun casts its shadows towards the South, and sometimes towards the North; but the Sun of my Soul is not subject to these Revolutions; in him there is neither change of shadow, nor shadow of change. 'Tis true, my God sometimes covers himself with a Cloud, and these sad Minutes which pass away: But my God and my God never leaves his Course, nor his ordinary Road. Tho' it were possible that the Love of my God could be subject to such Changes, as we experience in the Love of Men,

Men, I should nevertheless prefer the Love of God: For a Moment in the bosom of my God, will give me more Pleasure, than the eternal possession of all the Creatures without my God can do; since all created Pleasures are mingled with much bitterness.

A Prayer.

O Thou eternal source of Pleasure and Joy, make me to rest in thy Bosom, that I may know, that thou only art worthy to be lov'd. I think it but a small matter, that the Creatures are not capable of rendering me Love for Love, for I have a Hundred times experienc'd, that what I look'd upon as the fountain of Pleasures, has prov'd to me a fountain of Gall and Wormwood. That I may be no more tempted to return to those Pleasures, which have so often deceiv'd me, I beseech thee to scatter those Delusions and Charms, wherewith the World seeks to bewitch me, that I may love thee only, and understand that thou canst render me Love for Love.

C H A P. X.

The Third Consideration.

The Love of God transforms us into God

A Man becomes like that which he Loves.

TIS one of the Mysteries of Love, that it has the gift of transforming the Person loving into the Person loved,

even into the thing belov'd. Those who love nothing but Woods and Fields, Hunting, Dogs and Horses, become themselves Brutes, and remain for certain, in the lowest Order of Human Souls. Those who follow these Pleasures only for Recreation, and make them not the Object of their Love, do not necessarily transform themselves into these Objects, which are devoid of Understanding and Reason. But 'tis certain without any Exception, that the Souls which love will necessarily transform themselves into one another; for no Man loves, nor can love any thing but what is like him. If there be Love between a vertuous and a vicious Soul, the stronger side must prevail. If Vice be stronger; it will allure the vertuous Soul, and imprint its own Deformities upon it: But if the vertuous Soul be the prevailing, it will truly and perfectly change the Soul that was vicious. This we see every day: The Soul that loves heavenly things becomes heavenly, and the Soul that cleaves to terrestrial Goods remains Earthly, And as shows us, That it is our greatest Interest to love God, because our highest perfection consists in being like to God: And the Soul that loves God, is certainly transform'd, and becomes Divine and Beautiful like God.

Love is a Painter: Worldly Men tell us of the folly of their Transports, That they have in the middle of their Heart, the Image of him or her who is the Object of their Love. Worldly and Carnal Love is a flattering Painter; his Pencil deceives us, and places,

places Sovereign Beauties and Powerful Charms, in those Objects which have nothing in effect but vain shadows of Beauties, and real Deformities. But Divine Love is a faithful Painter, and the reason is, because it can never be guilty of a fault in Excess, nor Paint God to us as too Lovely. The great end of Piety and Religion, is to restore to Man the glorious Image of God, which he had put in the first Man ; and in this consists our Perfection. *We are renew'd in knowledge, after the Image of him who created him* Col. 3. 10. *We are chang'd into the same Image from glory to glory,* 2 Cor. 3. 18. And the same St. Paul tells us, *That we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord.* The Holy Spirit is the great Operator which draws a new Image, and Divine Love is the Pencil which describes the Features of it. This is easy to be understood. We never love any thing, but we wish to be lov'd by that which we love. Now we know also, that God cannot love any but those who resemble him, *who are holy as he is holy ; for there is no communion between light and darkness.* God is the chief and only Beauty, and consequently nothing can be amiable to God which is not transform'd into God. And this is the bottom of the Myserie, why we suffer a happy Metamorphosis by Divine Love. Add to this that well-known Maxim, *That the Soul is more where it Loves than where it Lives.* The Love therefore that makes a mutual Cohabitation : By it God is in us, because he Loves us, and we are in him because we Love him. And what then must this mutual Cohabitation

Cohabitation of the Soul in God, and God in the Soul, naturally produce? A perfect Illumination, and a compleat Resemblance. When a Seal is press'd upon soft Wax, it leaves upon it an Image and its own Impression: So God by applying himself immediately to purified Souls, and entering into them, does infallibly leave upon them the Impression of his own Properties. The View and Contemplation of God leads us to this; for we must know him that we may love him. The Objects that are worthy of our Love, do first Paint themselves upon our Eyes, and this Image passes afterwards into the Heart. Such is the effect which the View of God produces; his Image passes from our Sense to the bottom of our Heart, and there it fixes. O my God, suffer not thy Beauties quickly to pass away from me, but introduce them very far into the bottom of my Heart, and there Engrave them. What is the Soul that has not pass'd thro' the Hands of this Divine Painter, but the Love of God, but a mere piece of Canvas, an empty Table! And God grant it may be no more than so; but alas! It is a Table defil'd with the Features, which the Love of the World and Self-love have drawn upon it. It is nothing but Vanity, Ambition, Pride, Alienation from God, the Images of the Creatures. St. Paul says to the Faithful, Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conform'd to this World, but be ye transform'd by the renewing of your Mind, i. e. of your Heart.* The Greek Word in the Text is, *Be ye Metamorphos'd*: And this indeed is the *Metamorphosis*

phosis of Christianity, which has nothing kin to those infamous *Metamorphoses* of Poetical Fables, wherein we see the Gods Metamorphose themselves into Men, that they may commit Uncleanneſs. Here, with the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, and Divine Love, Men are Metamorphos'd into Gods; for *I have ſaid ye are Gods, and Sons of the moſt High*. If thoſe are call'd Gods, to whom the Word of God can much more ought they to be call'd ſo, whom the Word, the Eternal Word of God dwells, acts and operates. They are then Metamorphos'd into God, not indeed into his Eſſence, but into his Vertues; they are Metamorphos'd to ſpeak and act like God, and to do whatſoever is right, juſt and good before God: not at all to poſſeſs Divine Attributes; for all the Attributes of God, ſuch as they are in God, are communicable.

A Prayer.

TH E advantages which redound to me from thy Love, cannot be reckon'd. I eſteem it as a great thing, That I find thee a pleaſant and eternal Reſt. I very much believe that I ſhall meet there with a God who will render me Love for my Love, and render it to me with an Hundredfold. I cannot yet ſufficiently apprehend, how I ſhall become a kind of Divinity, an holy and ſpeaking Image of a Being infinitely perfect. O my God, be ſo kind, as to give me the Hand and Pencil of thy Divine Love.

that it may draw upon my Heart a Holy and perfect Image of thy Holiness and Purity. This Grace will infallibly lead me to the Holy Image of thy Glory, which thou wilt imprint upon me in Heaven. To thee my God, my great Original, to thee be Glory, Greatness of Beauty, thro' all Ages, *Amen.*

C H A P. XI.

The Fourth Consideration.

Divine Love Works in us great Changes.

THE Subject of the preceding Chapter is a Consideration too important to be so soon left off. These Changes, which Divine Love Works in Souls, are certainly the most powerful Motives that we can represent to our Heart, to persuade it to this Love. Neither Pride, nor Self-Love, can hinder us from thinking that we want many things, which are necessary to our chief Happiness and perfect Holiness. Therefore every one of us ought to be heartily persuaded, That Grace must work in us great Changes, to raise us up to the perfection of Holiness and Happiness. The Holy Spirit seems to want Words sufficient to express to us these Divine Operations. He calls this Change sometimes a *Translation* from one Kingdom to another; *God hath translated you from the Kingdom of*

Divers Names
given to the
Changes,
which Divine
Love works
in us.

John 3.

of Darkneſs to the Kingdom of Light, Col. He calls it alſo *Generation*, and *Regeneration* a being *Born of Water and the Spirit*, a being *Born again*. The natural Principles of natural Generation, form frightful Images of thoſe Imaginations, that are the leaſt delicate; the Blood, and Phlegm, the Bile, &c. are the firſt principles of a Man. There is a vaſt diſtance between this Saline, conſiſting of Maſs, and a perfect Man; but the diſtance is much greater between a Soul that is Regenerated by the Spirit of God, and the frightful Chaos, out of which Grace creates the Saints, which none can behold in their native ugleneſs without Horror. This Action is alſo call'd *Death* and *Mortification* and beſides, 'tis call'd *Creation*, to make us underſtand the nothingneſs of our former Being. On the other ſide, that we may have right apprehenſions of the Glory, the Beauty and Excellency of that ſtate in which Grace puts us, all the moſt emphatic Terms are employ'd. We have ſeen in the preceding Chapter, that the Holy Spirit does not omit to call it the *Metamorphoſis* altho' the uſe which the Pagans had made of that Word, ſeem'd to have defil'd it ſo much, that it could never be ſufficiently cleans'd and rendred worthy of the Sanctuary. Now to the end we may no longer doubt, but this Holy and Divine *Metamorphoſis*, is not a change of Gods into Men, but of Men into Gods, the ſame Apoſtle enjoyns this *Metamorphoſis*, has propoſed himſelf an Example of it: *I live, yet not as I live, but Chriſt liveth in me: And the life which I live*

ve in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of
 God, who lov'd me, and gave himself for me,
 Gal. 2. 20. It is no longer I in a human
 person, nor I in a human Life: I live, yet not
 in this respect; for I am Dead, I am cru-
 cified by the Cross of Jesus Christ, and my Old
 man is annihilated. There is in my Heart
 another I, 'tis the I of Jesus Christ my Love,
 his Life: And this is that new I myself;
 which is the principle of all my Operations.
 Thus I have chang'd from the I which I was.
 At you must not imagine that St. Paul has
 the Vanity to think himself the only Person
 in possession of this great Privilege: For he
 tells us elsewhere, that we all who behold as in
 a glass the glory of the Lord, i. e. the bright
 beams of this great Sun of Righteousness,
 are chang'd into the same Image from Glory to
 glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3.
 We all, and not I alone, lose our ancient
 I live, yet not I; We are all Metamor-
 phos'd, and made partakers of the glory of
 the Lord.

The Apostle St. Peter, in Eph. 2. chap. 1. Of the true
 describes this Idea of Deification yet much
 further, for he says in express Terms, That
 we are made partakers of the Divine Nature:
 we are therefore made Gods. The Saviour
 of the World, tho' he were jealous of his
 Father's Honour and his own, does never-
 theless attribute to us the magnificent name
 of Gods; I have said ye are Gods, and the
 Children of the most High. The meaning is
 that we cease to be Men; for as the
 Iron ceases not to be Iron, when it becomes
 part of the Furnace, but there is so close an
 union

Deification of
 Souls by Di-
 vine Love.

union between the Iron and the Fire, that they are no longer Two different Subjects; there is no Iron which is not Fire, nor Fire which is not Iron : So in the holy Soul there is no Human Nature which is not made Divine, nor any Divine Nature, which is not con-founded with the Human. The Wise will understand me aright, and apprehend the sense of these bold Figures.

Let us not be surpriz'd at the manner wherein worldly Men treat these Thoughts. There is nothing, say they, more like to Men, than those Saints of whom you make Gods upon Earth. We perceive nothing of these Changes and Metamorphoses which you tell us of. Suffer them to talk so; but let us be persuaded, that the Change which happen'd in the converted Thief, and thereby *Saul* a Persecutor, and a devouring Wolf, became a courageous and faithful Shepherd, is greater, more admirable, and more above the power of Nature, than the Metamorphosis of *Niobe* into a Stone, or that of the Sisters of *Phaeton* into Trees would be, tho' they were even true Histories and no Fables. *The natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, 1 Cor. 2. 14.* The flesh understandeth nothing of the Mysteries, the sensual Man knows nothing but what he feels; but he never felt anything like these Changes we have talk'd of and therefore he believes them not, he understands them not. But the Spiritual Man knoweth and discerneth all things. If the Sages of the Church are still but Men, and

have not a full command of all their Passions, this is a Yoke which God leaves upon them to bear in this World; it is a Thorn in their Flesh to humble them, and keep them from being puff'd up upon account of the excellency of their Revelations.

I come now to my principal Design, *i. e.* Grace Works to the Cause which works these wonderful in us these Changes, and that is the Holy Spirit, Grace, great Changes preventing Grace, efficacious and victorious by the means of Love, Grace, persevering Grace. But what does Grace to change and Metamorphose a Man after this manner? Besides its Inspirations, and its secret and unaccountable Operations, it works by the Christian Vertues, and chiefly by Faith and Love. What is this Fire which transforms the cold and heavy Metal, and turns it into burning Fire, but the Divine Love, whose nature is very like to flame, which flies, which ascends, which heats a Soul that is cold, heavy, languishing, and entangled in the bands of Sin? The Divine Love unites with Faith, it incorporates with it, and so they become one and the same Agent. Among all the things whose influence we feel, Divine Love is that whose Operation is most sensible, in these transformations of a faithful Soul; which ought to be to us a most powerful Motive to seek after it, and to improve it when we have found it. If we would be Regenerate, let us love God alone, let us love him above all things, and this Love will be a Divine seed, which will make us become New-Men, and produce our New-Man out of its Nothing and its Chaos.

F 2

Would

Would we die to the Old Man, and rise again in newness of Life, let us kindle in our Souls the flames of this Sacred Love, and let us die in this fire of Love, that we may rise again by the heat of the same fire, coming forth out of our Ashes and our Nothing. Would we lose our I and our Life, that we may be admitted into the I of Jesus Christ, and attract his Life into us, and so we may be able to say, *Christ liveth in me*; let us love this lovely Saviour, and our love will attract his. When we love, he will not fail to come into us; and when we shall have him in our Bosom, we shall be forc'd to cry out with a holy Transport, *I have found him whom my Soul loves; I have found him, and I will not let him go.*

A Prayer to Jesus Christ.

O My Divine Saviour, the lovely Spouse of my Soul, come, enter, enlighten, change, kill, quicken; I call upon thee for aid, against thy Enemy and mine: I invite thee to enter into my House, however unworthy to lodge thy Majesty and thy Holiness. But come I pray thee, and cleanse this House, that it may be worthy of thy Divine Presence. Come then, O thou great Sun of Righteousness, come, and change me into another Sun which shall be thy Image. Come and Paint thyself in my Soul, as in a fine Chrystal, as in a living and clear fountain. Come and kindle Love in me, that the Divine Love may work in me all those Changes, which will render me worthy of thee.

thy Love. Come and by thy Sacred fire purify this unclean House; come and drive away the deadly darkness of the Flesh and of Sin, that I may see thee without a Shadow, taste thee without Disgust, and possess thee without End. To thee, my loving Redeemer, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be Honour, Empire and Glory, thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. XII.

The Fifth Consideration.

Divine Love Works in the Believer all the Pleasure and Joy he has.

If true Love works in the Soul all that is holy and great in it, it produces in it all its Happiness, Tranquillity, Pleasure and Joy. The Scripture tells us, *That a good conscience is a continual Feast; that Light is the Reward for the Righteous, and Joy for the upright in heart.* Does any one think, that these Joys of faithful Souls are not to be found in Adversity, but only in the time of their Prosperity. Surely they are more lively and sensible in their Adversity; because when the Joy of human Prosperity mingles with Divine Consolations, it hinders the distinct Perception of them; and we think that we rejoice only in God, when indeed we rejoice for our worldly Prosperity. And

therefore 'tis in the afflicted Saints, that we must seek for Examples of these *unspeakable Joys which pass all Understanding*. Now whence come these ineffable Joys and Pleasures to the sanctified and transform'd Souls? Is it not Divine Love that produces them? And is not a Man very glad when he possesses his chief Happiness, and is sure that he possesses it?

Now by what means can we be assur'd of possessing God, but by his Love dwelling in us? *Hope maketh not ashamed, because the Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, Rom. 5. 5.* O ye Christian Souls, understand by the Love of God whatever you please, it will make no great difference in the Case. If you understand that Love wherewith God loveth you, 'tis true, that this is the Foundation of your Hope; ye are Happy, and ye shall always be so, because God loves you. And this is the Love of God to you, which the Holy Spirit has shed abroad in your Hearts, and whereof he Seals in you the Truth, the Firmness, and the Continuance. But how Seals he this Truth in you? Is it not by your Love? The Love, I mean, by which you love God; for you can never be assur'd, that God loves you, but by assuring yourself upon Enquiry into your own Breast, that you Love God above all Things.

The Love by
which we
Love God.

But if you would rather understand *the Love of God*, that Love wherewith you love God, you will find in this Sense something more Sweet and Tender. This is the Love which is truly shed abroad in your Hearts.

Hearts: *Shed abroad*, and not shut up in one Corner; for this Divine Love possesses, and ought to possess the whole Soul entirely: Like a precious Liquor that enters into all the Corners of a Vessel, and leaves none of them Empty. Hence it is, that Sanctified and Transform'd Souls love God with all their Heart, with all their Strength, and with all their Mind. And this Love is *shed abroad in our Hearts, by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.*

For this adorable Person of the Trinity, is the God of Love. He loves, and he inspires Love: He produces it, and he sheds it abroad in the Heart. And here let us observe, *en passant*, that the Pelagianism of this Age, is a very absurd and wicked Doctrine: 1st, It is very absurd, in resisting the clear Evidence which is in that Text of St. Paul, *be Love that is given unto us.* His Love is shed abroad in our Soul, It is not therefore a Work of our own doing; he produces it in us. And by whom does he produce it? *By the Holy Spirit.* But 2^{dly}, It is also very wicked, in robbing us of our sweet Consolations: For in fine, 'tis the Divine Love produc'd by the Holy Spirit in our Hearts, which makes our Hope such, that it *cannot be sham'd*: 'Tis this Love which is a sure pledge of the Glory to come, because it is an undoubted Proof of our present Grace.

If it were possible for any sanctified Soul to doubt of this Truth, That Spiritual Joys The ineffable Pleasures of Divine Love in the Soul. come to us only from true Love, I would pray them to consider with me, That the Soul is always full of Joy when it has what it Loves. 'Tis true, that Worldly Men possess

possess many times what they Love without having much Joy : But this is, because as soon as they have obtain'd what they desir'd, they cease to love it ; and they cease to love it, because they begin to know the Emptiness of it. But it is not so with Divine Love ; for the more we love God, the more he is united to us, and the more closely God is united to us, the more we Taste him, and the more sensible we are of his Beauty, Goodness and Greatness. Imagine all that you please, Gather together all the most delicious Objects, the sweetness of the Honey and Milk of Canaan, the perfumes that are most friendly to the Heart and Brain ; the most charming accents of a Voice manag'd with all the Rules of Art, of all sorts of Musical Instruments most delicately Touch'd ; the delightful Sights, such as those of the Fields and Meadows, the Woods and Fountains ; the profound Peace wherewith Lovers say, they enjoy themselves in their Amorous Solitude : And all this is nothing to what may be said upon this Subject.

But do not expect, O ye faithful Souls, that I should here give you exact Descriptions of these Spiritual Joys and Pleasures, which Divine Love produces in Sanctified and Transform'd Souls. It is a Subject very Tender and Sweet, upon which we may pour out a whole Vial of Uction ; but I forbear, because this whole Treatise ought to be fill'd with, and made up of these Effusions. I cannot here enlarge much without running the hazard of repeating 'the same Things : Only remember, that the Scripture calls this

a joy unspeakable, a joy that passes all understanding. And it would be great Rashness in any one, to endeavour to relate a Thing which the great Apostle of the Gentiles judg'd unspeakable. If it be *above all Understanding*, it must be much more above all our Words and Expressions. Let us therefore define nothing; but let us not refuse to borrow every thing that is most Emphatical, most Sweet and most Tender, to form to ourselves some Idea of this Divine Love, and its excellent Effects: Let us call it an *amorous Extasy*, a Transport, a Fire, a Kissing, a Marriage-Union, an Embracing, a sweet Taste, the Delights of *Eden*, a torrent of Pleasure, an holy Drunkenness, a Rest, a Mountain of Peace: None of these Figures are too bold to express to us the inward Sensation of Souls truly possess'd of God and his Love. As to ourselves, being imperfect Souls, let us not judge of it by our own Experience. *It is the white Stone, wherein a name is Written, which none can Read, but he to whom it is given.* These are inward Sensations, which are not well-known to any but the Holy Spirit who produces them, and to the Saints who receive them, and chiefly to the Saints of the highest Rank. What we feel of it is too weak to be alledg'd as an Example. But let us never cease to beg of the Spirit of Grace, of Light and Love, that he would favour us with some of those Holy Transports of Love.

A Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

O Holy Spirit, who art the Love of the adorable Trinity: O blessed Spirit, who produces those Pleasures wherewith glorified Souls are fill'd; come into me, thou source of Pleasure and Joy, come and overwhelm my Thirsty Soul; come and moisten this Thirsty Soul, which is empty of true Pleasure. Pluck off the Veil of Flesh and Sin, which deprives me of the sight of my Divine Spouse, which conceals from me his greatest Beauties, and hinders me from loving him as I ought. Take from me the Impurities which darken my Eyes and deprave my Taste. Make me sensible of Spiritual Pleasures, make me feel those Divine Transports, to the end I may seek without ceasing, during the night of this World, him whom my Soul Loves, and whom I desire to Love in time and in Eternity. *Amen, even so Amen.*

C H A P. XIII.

The Sixth Consideration.

Divine Love enables the Soul, and renders it greater and larger.

The Conjugal Union of the Soul with God, advances it to a high Dignity.

THE preceding Reflexions do furnish us with another; for if Divine Love transforms

transforms the Soul into God, it renders it more noble and beautiful. It becomes the Child of Heaven, it is no more born of the Flesh and of Blood, but it is born of God, begotten by the Holy Spirit, who is the Author of all happy Births. Tho' we should consider Divine Love only under the notion of an Union, this would be more than sufficient to make us understand, that the Soul is very much ennobled by the Love of God: for a Maid advances, or degrades her rank according to her Alliances. And upon this account the Souls which are closely link'd to Sins, to Crimes, and the Vanities of this World, become vile before God. A Maid of a mean Birth, who Marries a King, shares in all his Greatness, and participates of his Sovereign Power: A Soul link'd to God by the Sacred Bands of Conjugal Love, is no longer an *Egyptian* descended of the Cursed and Black Blood of the *Africans*: It is a *Schulamite*, very beautiful and comely, and which is a sharer in the Honours and Greatness of *Solomon*. The new Bride enters into the Chair of her Spouse, with a Crown of Gold. She that has been Divorc'd, forgets the meanness and disgrace of her Youth: And then the Soul becomes more noble, it becomes more large and extensive by Divine Love. 'Tis certain that the Souls and their Faculties are enlarg'd proportionably to the greatness of their Objects: But of all Loves, Self-Love is that which most contracts the Soul, because it confines it within the narrow circumference of itself, beyond which it never extends, and within which it endeavours
to

to bring all other things. 'Tis true, that would make itself the Centre of the Universe, endeavours to shut up the whole Universe within itself. But in this Design it does not Succeed; for the Soul, that does not go out of itself to Love, remains always within its ancient Bounds. The greater and more sublime the Objects are, on which the Soul bestows its Love, the more the Soul enlarges and dilates itself to embrace them: For God has made the Soul so great on purpose that he may dwell in it; and therefore the vastest Creatures cannot enlarge the Heart of Man, but on the contrary Contract it; for it makes itself Little, that it may bind them fast, and tie them up close. God alone with his infinite Greatness fills the vast capacity of Man's Heart, and overflows it in such a manner, that the Heart wants to be extended as it were, *in infinitum*; that it may receive this vast Object. And from hence proceeds the insatiable desire of him, who thirsts after Righteousness. He is never satisfy'd till he perfectly obtains a full possession of his God; who is the Object of his Love: Which not being able to find here below, it is always *Panting*, as being always *Amorous*: It is always *Fainting*, and therefore it says, *Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of Love*, Cant. 2. 5. In Heaven, where the Soul will possess its God perfectly, it will be of such a vast Extent, that the whole Universe will be too little to fill it. It will know, see and possess all Things.

A Prayer.

MY Soul, O my God, aspires after the Glory of being thy Spouse. This is a very high attempt: But thou allows to us that Thought, which would otherwise appear extravagant and Proud; for thou hast bid of thy Church, *That thou hast espoused it by thy eternal Compassion*; That having found abandon'd at its Birth, and wallowing in its Blood, thou took care of its Education, and spread the Skirt of thy Garment over it: and thus *my Husband is he that made me*. Thou art my Father, and nevertheless thou shalt be my Spouse. My Soul will be great in the quality of thy Daughter, but it will yet much greater consider'd as thy Spouse. Refuse me not therefore, O my God, the divine favours, which must arise from that mystical Union. To thee my Saviour and Redeemer, be Honour and Glory thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. XIV.**VII, VIII, & IX Considerations.**

God is our own proper Good.

SINCE we are enquiring after all the Motives, which may induce us to Love God, let us not forget this Consideration,
That

That every one ought to love what is his own. Upon this account we praise a Spouse for loving her Husband, a Wife for loving her Children; and we Pardon those Men, who love their Goods, if the Goods are their own, and be not ill-gotten. But is there any good thing in the World, that belongs so much to us as our God? All other Goods are without us, but this is within us. We do not, and we cannot always enjoy what we Love, Sickness, Death and Absence part us from it. But as to our God, every Moment we do and can feel him: We speak to him when we please, and we hear him speak as often as we will. Neither Banishment, nor Prison, nor Walls, nor Ramparts, nor Ditches, nor Land, nor Sea, can separate us from this good God. I am sent into Banishment, says a Saint; I should be very Unhappy if I were Banish'd into any Place where my God is not. Time cannot Ravish him from us, nay, even Death itself cannot deprive us of him. On the contrary the faithful Soul says, *I desire to depart that I may be with Christ*, and possess my God; this is my proper Good. 'Tis true, I do not pretend to possess him so as to exclude my Brethren, *who are heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ*, nevertheless I shall possess him wholly and entire, without Partition.

Consideration
8. God is the
source of all
lawful Love,
and therefore
ought to be
the Ocean of
it

True Philosophy informs us, That God the first Cause puts all Nature in Motion. Now the Motion of Souls is Love; and therefore God is the principle of the Motion of Souls, *i. e.* of their Love. He is not the Cause of the disorders of Love, but only the

Cause of Love itself. Nature which forceth the Waters with Violence out of the Bowels of the Earth, makes them Run, and so is the principle of their Motion; but this Motion varies a Hundred ways by the several extrinsic Causes it meets with; for of these Waters some flow calmly and regularly in the Meadows, and others leap violently down, sometimes to the Right and sometimes to the Left-hand, by irregular Motions, according as the Rocks determine them, which occasion this Variation. God has likewise imprinted in all Souls the Sensation and Motion of Love, wherein the Life and Action of a Soul properly consists. If this Love be well-govern'd and managed, then God takes it into his own Care from its first rising at the Spring-head, and guided it into pure and streight Canals. But this Love whereof God is the Author, as he is of all Motions, turns out of the right way, when it is deprived of the Conduct of God, by growing itself down a-cross the Rocks, and running after the grandeurs or vain preferences of this Earth.

Now this Truth that God is the Original principle of all Love, does necessarily lead to this other Truth, That all Love, which well-govern'd is design'd for God; And that all Love which departs from God goes astray out of the Right way. God therefore being the source of Love, he ought also to be the Ocean of it; to which it ought wholly to tend, and into which it ought also to discharge itself. God who has made all things, made all things for himself. The
Sea

Consideration
9 Thankfulness require,
that we should
render to God
Love for
Love.

Sea discharges its Waters thro' hidden Canals, but 'tis to the end that the Earth may restore them with Interest by the Rivers and Springs. To all the other Motives we must joyn that of Thankfulness: We should render to every one Love for Love, but chiefly to God; he Loves us at all times, and from Eternity, and we must Love him to Eternity; he Loved us when we no way deserved to be Loved; for we were *Enemies to him in our understanding by wicked Works*. We must therefore love him who so highly deserves our Love. I shall not farther enlarge upon this last Consideration, for I have sufficiently explained it where we Discourse of the Goodness of God and its Effects.

A Prayer.

THE Lord is my Lot, and the Portion of my Inheritance, the Lines are fallen to me in pleasant Places. Is not this enough, my Soul to fill and satisfy thy Ambition, and thy Self-Love? O my God, give me this Holy Ambition, which may make me despise all the vain grandeurs of the Earth, and aspire after that Honour which is most sublime and Glorious; enlighten my Self-love and make it understand, that it ought to be well-content with possessing as *it's own* an infinite Good, a Good that can never be force be taken away from it. 'Tis from thee O my sweet and Divine Saviour, that my own proper Good comes, for who is capable of giving thee but thyself? But since thy Gifts are without Repentance, never recede

this Gift: O thou who art the keeper of Israel, watch over the keeping of this Good, which thou hast given me as my proper Good. The World, Satan and mine own Heart, would make me Renounce this *Property*.

They would fain have me at least at the present time to part with this Prize: And to say to my Sovereign Good, *For the present, you may go away, and when I have occasion I will send for you again*, Acts 24. 20. When I shall have enjoyed the Goods which my Senses delight in; when I shall grow weary of them, then I will leave them as such Goods, whereof I have only the use; and return to my own proper Good. O Lord, suffer not my Heart to fall into this Disorder. To thee be all Honour and Glory, through all Ages, *Amen*.

C H A P. XV.

The Tenth Consideration.

The Excellency of Divine Love.

WE are now enquiring after the Persuasives to Divine Love. And we have not yet touch'd upon that Motive, which perhaps is the most forcible to excite in our Souls, *viz.* The Excellency of this vertue. This Excellency is sufficiently in-
mated to us in the manner whereby the love of God is Commanded: And in the title which the Holy Spirit gives to this commandment, *Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God, &c.* this is called *the first and great Commandment*,
Part I. G

This is the first and great Commandment.

mandment : This is the first in the Order of Sanctification, after the first Acts of Faith, and the last with regard to the State of perfection : This is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of Christians, the beginning and end of Christianity ; This is the *great Commandment*, as it is the first ; for here every thing is great : *The End*, that is God, a being infinitely perfect ; *the Difficulty*, for there is no Vertue whose Perfection is more difficult to be attained ; *The Duration* of we shall see, that for it is Eternal ; *the Recompence*, for it is an infinite Glory, which God has prepared for those who Love him ; *the Punishment*, for the horrors which the Enemies of God feel are inexpressible ; the *Peace* which this Sensation of Love produces, for it is a *Joy which passes all understanding*.

The Divine
Love is the
fulfilling of
the Law

This Vertue is justly called the fulfilling of the Law ; for he who Loves God has done all his Duty ; he who loves God truly can he be wanting in zeal for his Glory, in Charity to his Members, in fervency at his Prayers, in Chastity in his Heart ? How can impure Love ever continue in a Soul against the flames of Divine Love ? *Many Waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods ever drown it : If a Man would give all the substance of his house it would utterly be contemned, Cant. 8.* Is there any Sensation in us more powerful and tyrannical, than the Love of the World ; the World which is our Idol and our Dagon ? But if once the Ark of Divine Love were placed beside this Idol, it would fall upon its Nose, it would break in pieces its Head and Hands ; it would lose all its
Strength

Strength: Self-love is yet more to be feared than the love of the World; for it attacks us near at Hand; It is in our Bowels, it enters into our Closets; it is present not only at our Meals and Feasts, but also at all our Devotions; it is admitted into our Retirements, and follows the Devotees even into the Deserts. We are that part of the World which loves ourselves most; neither do we love the World but from a principle of Self-love: These two Loves, Divine Love, and Self-love, are the two Sovereigns of this lower World, and divide the Empire of the Universe between them. And Self-love by virtue of the principle of Lust and Corruption, which is in Man, triumphs over the other Love, and is absolute Lord in the far greater part of Mankind: It Reigns but too much in that little part which God has reserved for his own Portion. These two Loves therefore are continually Quarrelling, and Self-love is never Conquered but by Divine Love. Here therefore is the true fulfilling of the Law; for he who has mortified his Self-love by the help of Divine Love, hath finish'd all, as well as Jesus did on the Cross; for he hath Crucified the Old-man and its Lusts. There is yet a further advantage belongs to it; Divine Love facilitates the Practice of all other Vertues, and even supplies the place of all good Works. In order to the Practice of Christian Vertues, there must be Opportunity, Place, and Time. Who is there always in a Condition to shew Charity to the Poor? Can the Poor Man give an Alms? Can he Comfort the Afflicted,

Divine Love,
and Love of
the World,
divide be-
tween them
the Empire of
the World.

Divine Love
supplies the
place of all
good Works.

when there is no Affliction? But Divine Love does all this at all Times, and without the help of Opportunity. Hast thou no Goods to give to a Miserable Creature? Love, and thou hast given; hast thou no Tongue to celebrate the Goodness and Excellencies of God? Love God, and thy Love will be a Praise of thy Heart, which will please him more than all the most studied Praises of the Mouth. Martyrdom is an excellent Work, Christian Patience is of great force before God; but God gives not to all his Children the opportunities of offering to him these great Sacrifices: Love, and thy Love will make thee become in the Eyes of thy God an holy Victim, whose good smell will make him smell a sweet Savour, and appease him. All the other Vertues give to God only one part of a Man: Chastity consecrates to him the Body, and makes of it a pure Temple for the Holy Spirit; Liberality gives him our Goods; Martyrdom offers the Sacrifice of our Blood; Zeal gives him our Strength, our Credit, and all that we can do to the advancement of his Glory: Faith Sacrifices to him the Opposition of our Reason; Hope consecrates to him all the desires of the Soul: But Divine Love gives all at once to God, both Body and Soul, Goods and Strength, Blood and Life. Among all the Gifts we can offer to God, we give him nothing of our own; for all belongs to him and comes from him. This is what made the Royal Prophet uneasy, who said, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?* Psal. 116. The Throne,

Divine Love alone gives to God, all that the other Vertues together can give to him.

God cannot have our Love without us.

the Crown, the People, the Subjects, the Riches, the Tributes, and the Nations which are subdued by force of Arms: All this, I say, is from God. But give to God thy Love, and this is something which he cannot have without thee. Thy Love is thy own proper Good, and God will be well-satisfied with this Present; do not therefore refuse him this which is the only Thing he cannot have without thee. Do not any longer complain, O Faithful Soul, that the Law of God is very difficult to be Observed: Is there any thing more easy than to Love? Without Love nothing can be done, and with Love all things may be done. The Disciples were frightened, they shut themselves up in secret Chambers, no place appeared to them secure enough against the fury of the Jews, who had put their good Master to Death; because the Spirit of Fire, the Divine Love, had not yet descended into them. *Peter* denied his Master at the Voice of a Maid, all the Disciples fled and disappear'd; but when they were inflamed by Divine Love, they came out of their Secret Places, they durst appear in Publick; and endured the Torrents of Contradiction, and the most cruel Effects of Peoples Persecution. When the Engines of War, which are called Cannons, are without Fire, altho' they be Charged with Powder and Salt-Peter, they are only Lumpish Masses without Motion? The Infant plays securely about the Bodies, whose Intrails include the Seeds of Thunder; but when the Fire is in it, they break and tear all in pieces through the thickest Walls, and

All things are possible to Love.

ruin the strongest Fortifications. When a Soul is destitute of Divine Love, it is the Sport of Devils, the slightest Temptations Conquer it ; but when the Fire is in it, when Love is kindled there, it can overcome all Temptations. This may be seen in those Women and these Children, in these simple People who endured the most cruel Torments of Martyrdom : For what did this but only Divine Love ?

A Description
of the Tor-
ments which
our Confes-
sors suffered
in the present
Persecution.

What gave our Confessors the Courage to endure the Loathsome, Cruel, Stinking Prisons, which were attended with all that is Horrible to our weak Nature, but Divine Love ? What is it that inspires them with strength to undergo the frightful Labours of the Gallies, especially in a Burning Summer, such as the last was ? A hot Sun Consumes and Devours them ; it cleaves the Skin in all Parts ; and these Crevices are always as so many running-Sores. If the Water falls upon them, whether it come from the Clouds or the Sea, which one would think should refresh them, it tears them open further, and makes them feel all the Pains of the most cruel Torture, ordinary or extraordinary. If one of their Companions in Misery happen to touch them, although it be by chance, and slightly, they endure most sharp Pains. And when a Merciless Commander lays on with his Stick and his Bulls-pizzels, grievous Blows upon these Rotten Carcases, they feel all the Pains which a Miserable Wretch endures upon the Cross or Wheel, when his Bones are Broken. Thus they pass the day in those cruel Hardships, and at night

night these Believers endure a new sort of Torment. A Thousand stinking Insects creep into their Wounds, being always Open; and by their Stings, which are as sharp as Nails and Thorns, put these Martyrs to the Torment of a continual Cross, and never suffer them to take one Moment of Rest. If any one discover among these Holy Martyrs somewhat of Charity, some Alms which has been obtained by their Intercessions and Prayers: If any one of the Glorious Saints endeavour to fortify his Brethren against Temptation, by persuading them that they ought not to defile themselves with Idolatry, in taking off the Hat before an Idol, both he who persuades, and they who are persuaded, are Condemned to that which they call the Bastonnade; a Terrible Torment, wherein the Poor Body half-Eaten up with Rottenness is stretch'd upon a Plank, and receives a Thousand Blows with hard Thongs of Leather-Whips, which make new Wounds, and besmear it all over with blood, insomuch, that many times they dye under the Torment. This is what the illustrious Confessor Monsieur *Lansonnier*, for instance, suffered, being accused of having received Alms for his Brethren, and distributing them among them. This is what many others suffer'd a little while ago, because they would not take off their Cap at the Elevation of the Host: This is a sincere description of the Suffering of our Confessors, and which is no ways aggravated. Now is there any thing Human in this Patience, to suffer such a Torment Voluntarily,

G 4

and

and when by a Renunciation one can save himself from it; this is an effect of Love which to us is Incomprehensible, and which persuades us of the Truth we have now Established, that all things are possible to Love.

A Prayer.

THOU art so Good and Merciful, O my God, as to furnish me with an easy means of paying thee all that I owe thee! Tho' I should have a Thousand Worlds and a Thousand Crowns to present unto thee, what would this be to him whose Power contains in itself a Million of Worlds, and who extends his Empire even to the Extremity of these immense Spaces which have neither Extremity nor Bounds! Tho' I should have a Thousand and a Thousand Lives to Sacrifice unto thee, what proportion would there be between those Victims, and the Majesty of that God whom I adore, and to whom I Sacrifice? But in Loving thee, O my God, I do all. My Heart is more in the Eyes of thy Mercy, then all the Offerings which have smok'd upon thy Altars from the beginning of the World. O Eternal Father, suffer me not therefore to forget this Duty of Love, which is so Essential and so Profitable. Let me Love thee through all Ages, *Amen.*

C H A P. XVI.

The Continuation of the Tenth
Consideration.

*Of the Excellency and Beauty of Divine
Love.*

WE Concluded the preceding Chapter by proving this Truth, That all things are possible to Love. We shall begin the present Chapter with a Reflexion very like to that, which is this, That Love in general is the most powerful of all the Springs which put Souls in Motion: And that Divine Love ought not to affect our Souls with less Commotions than Human Passions. What ought not Divine Love to do of difficult Things in general, since carnal Love is capable of doing so much for that which is called the Object of its Passion? We look upon all that is told us of the effects of Love, as Fables and Romances; yet altho' there may be in this Case many facts forged and false, nevertheless it is certain, that this Passion in its Transports is capable of all those Outrages that we have heard Men talk of. O my Soul, art thou not ashamed to see, that a Man to assuage a brutish Passion, is capable of passing the Seas; of exposing himself to Fire, and to the Edge of the Sword; and of suffering Thousand Pains, and venturing upon a Thousand

Divine Love
ought not to
have less force
than Human
Love.

Thousand Dangers? And that thou art stopt at the first Difficulties thou meetest with in the Love of thy God? Wilt thou suffer a Tender and Delicate Woman to undertake all Things, that she may follow her Lover? To trample under feet the Laws of Chastity, which alone are the glory of her Sex, and to break through all the most frightful Objects of Shame, to satisfy her Love? And shall thou faint in running after this Good, who has discovered to thee so many Beauties, and encompass thee with so many Benefits?

Divine Love
is the High-
way to salva-
tion.

O Christian Souls, quit not this Argument which ought to be to you so Sweet and Charming. Be not weary of Meditating upon the greatness and excellency of Divine Love. What may we not add to describe the Greatness of this Vertue? it is the Highway to Salvation. As the Highway from Rome, is that which leads from Rome hither, and from hence to Rome; so Divine Love leads us to Salvation, and that which brings Salvation to us.

Jesus came to us in the way of Love, for God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that the World through him might be saved, John 3. This is the Love which fastned our Jesus to the Cross. The Zeal of the House of God hath eaten me up. None hath greater Love than he that dies for his Friends. The good Shepherd lays down his Life for his Sheep. If Salvation be come to us by the way of Love, then there is no other way but Love, in which we can go to Salvation. Walk in Love as Christ also hath Loved you.

given himself for us. This Love is a Fire, is the Chariot of Fire in which *Elias* was carried up from the Earth. By Divine Love we are snatch'd away from the Earth, and translated to God. This is the Sacred Fire of the Altar, which Burns Day and Night, to kindle our Sacrifices. *Many waters cannot quench this Fire*; but if we suffer it to be extinguished by negligence, there is no hope of rekindling it: *For those who have tasted the heavenly gift, if they fall away, cannot be moved again by Repentance.* O Christian Virgins, ye Holy Virgins, who are appointed to guard this Sacred Fire, continue pure like Virgins. And be careful in your watch, lest the Temptations of the World should extinguish it, and it should perish of your negligence.

Divine Love must certainly be a great virtue, since it is capable of communicating so much Greatness to the smallest Things. Where any thing smaller than a Cup of cold Water? Yet even that is not without reward from God, when it is given from the principle of Divine Love: *Whoever shall give a Cup of cold Water to one of these little ones for my sake, shall not lose his Reward.* Is there any thing more Mean, more Impure, more Polluted, than thy good Works, Alms, and thy Charities? Yet the Divine Love which is joyned with them renders them so great, that thy heavenly Father will admit thee to the enjoyment of the same Pleasures, which are prepar'd for thee in Eternity, upon the account of all these good Works. *Come ye blessed of my Father, because*

Divine Love gives a Greatness to the smallest things.

Love is all
the Vertues.
St. Aug.

because ye have done all these things for my name's sake, Inherit the kingdom prepar'd for you from the beginning of the World, Matt. 25. On the contrary, every thing that is destitute of this great Vertue, how great soever it appears in our Eyes, is nothing worthy the Eyes of our great Judge: *Tho' I should give all my Goods to the Poor, and my Body to be Burnt, yet if I have not Charity, and the Love of God, I am nothing,* 1 Cor. 13. Love says a Father of the Church, is all the Vertues. 'Tis *Prudence*, for it is prudent to place our Love and our Heart in a good Place, and to fix it on such a good thing as cannot be Ravisht from us; it is *Strength* to joyn ourselves inseparably to such a Subject, as many Enemies endeavour to deprive us of; It is *Justice* to render an endless and boundless Love to a Good, whose Beauty and Goodness have no Bounds; it is *Temperance* to deprive ourselves of all our other Loves for the sake of this; it is *Thankfulness* to render Love to him from whom we have receiv'd so much; it is *Wisdom*, to make good a Choice, and place our Treasure in a safe Place.

All the Vertues
are only
subservient to
Divine Love.

I will conclude this Chapter with two important Considerations: The first is, That all the Christian Vertues are subservient to Divine Love, and are design'd only to procure its Assistance. *Faith* contemplates God, and makes us embrace his Truth; Thus by this way of knowledg we go on to the Love of that being infinitely perfect. The Love of our Neighbour ought to make us concerned for our Neighbours, as we are concern'd

rselves. This is the beginning of the Sacrifice of our Self-Love, which disposes us to sacrifice it whole and entire to the Love of God. *Hope* makes us turn our Eyes and Hearts towards God, that we may fill our Souls with those great Idea's which his Promises give us; and this has no other design but to inflame our Love to this God, whom we look upon as the Source of the Blessings to come, as well as the Author and Father of our present good Things. If our Christianity takes us off from the World, it is only to facilitate our Union and Connection with God, by the Bands of Divine Love. Turn yourself to all imaginable sides, you will find every-where this Truth, that all Christian Vertues are subservient to Divine Love.

My Second Consideration, is a Reflexion Divine Love
 which we made elsewhere, but cannot be is the only
 cited here: And it is this, that Divine Vertue that is
 Love is the only Eternal Vertue, it is that Eternal.
 which shall Reign in the Heavens:
There shall be no more Faith, for then we shall
 ; And Faith, which consists in believing
 that is not seen, shall consequently vanish
 away: *There shall be no more Hope*, for it shall
 be lost in Fruition; there shall be no more
 Sorrow, for there shall be no more Sin: There
 shall be no more *Offences* to be Pardoned, for
 there shall be no more Enemies; there shall
 be no more *Compassion*, for there shall be no
 longer any Miserable Creatures: There
 shall be no more *Liberality* and Beneficence,
 there shall be no longer any Poor: There
 shall be no more *Patience*, for none can then
 suffer

suffer any Evil. Thus all the good Works of the Blessed shall be reduc'd to their exercise of Love and Thankfulness, without End, and without Intermission. God being possesst shall compleat their Happiness; and God being Loved, will be the sum of all their Vertues. *St. Paul* says, that Gifts and Vertues shall Vanish away, but *now abiding these Three, Faith, Hope, and Charity, but the greatest of these Three is Charity, 1 Cor. 13.* In effect it is the greatest and the only Eternal Vertue. Faith and Hope remain during this Life, and all the progress of Grace. But Charity continues in Eternity for all the duration of Glory. The Love of our Neighbour is a part of that Charity and Love which is only to remain in Paradise; but this does not hinder, but still it may be true that Divine Love will be the only living and reigning Vertue; for the Blessed will Love one another, only with relation to God; they will be all mingled together in God: *God will be all in all.* And this Love will swallow up all the other Loves, as an Ocean swallow up all the Rivers and Torrents.

A Prayer.

THESE are the efforts of my Imagination, to represent to my Heart the powerful Motives, which ought to incline it to Love thee, O my God. These are the invincible Reasons, to which the Flesh can oppose nothing, but only *I will not, I cannot.* Alas! after this manner all our Labours will be vain and unprofitable:

shall see that which is good and I cannot do
; *For there is a War in my Members, which
warreth against the Law of my Mind, Rom. 7.*
I know very well the Law of Love, I con-
fess that it is good and excellent; *but how
to do what is good I find not. O wretched
Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the
Body of this Death; from this dead Body,
from this Slavery? O my sweet Saviour,
be thou therefore, be thou the Orator, the
Teacher, the Doctor, to teach me this Lesson
of Divine Morality, and inform me of this
Practice, that I may love thee to all Eternity,
thou hast loved me from all Eternity.
O thee, my God, Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost, be honour and glory through all
ages, Amen.*

THE
Continuation
OF THE
FIRST PART
OF
The TREATISE of
DIVINE LOVE
CONTAINING
Four Helps to the Love of God.

CHAP. I.

*Of Meditation, Contemplation, and Prayer
the First help to Divine Love.*

IN a Treatise of Divine Love, we cannot omit a Chapter of Helps to the Practice of this Divine Vertue ; and this Chapter cannot come in a place more Natural than after the Motives ; since the Motives are Helps to Love, the Helps ought to follow just after the Motives.

The first of these Helps, shall be called Meditations, Contemplations and Prayers: The Second shall be, to place ourselves continually before God, and to have him always before our Eyes: The Third shall be, the Mortifications that are necessary for the Purification of our Love; And the Fourth shall be, to remove the Obstacles to Divine Love.

Meditation, of which we are first to speak, Of Meditation, to what faculty it appertains, is an Action of close Attention and Application in the Soul, which Ruminates upon an Important Subject, and considers it all manner of ways, to discover the Good and Evil of it, all the Beauties, the Greatness and Meanness of it; and to shew what is to be desired, and what is to be avoided in it, what is to be Loved or what is to be Hated. Thus with respect to God, Meditation is an Action of the Soul, which labours to dive into this great Subject; which loves to lose itself in these Abysses of Light, which plunges itself into them; which goes on further and further, and never stops, labouring to discover all the Beauties and Greatness of God, that it may Love him perfectly. This Action is justly attributed to the whole Soul; to the Understanding, because the Soul knows and understands what it loves, and why it will love; to the Memory, for it is unquestionable that the Devout Soul enjoys its Memory in its Meditations, to represent it faithfully and exactly all that it has heard said, and all that it has known of God and his Greatness; as well as what it has experienced and tasted of his Goodness. This

Part I. H Me-

Meditation is also attributed to the Heart, *My Heart is enditing a good Matter*, Psal. 45. And it is the Heart which is the Closet of the Devout Soul, wherein it shuts itself up, that it may not be called out to another Place. The Will is not to be excluded from this Holy Action of pure Love, which is called Contemplation and Meditation. The Will indeed is defined, A Faculty which is blind: And 'tis true this Faculty does not see by itself; But it sees all things by the Eyes of the Understanding, with which it is so perfectly united, and to speak the truth, so mingled, as to be only one and the same thing.

The Imagination acts most in Meditation.

After this it must be confessed, that of all the Faculties of the Soul, the Imagination is that which operates most in Meditation. It is the sprightly part of the Soul, wherein its briskness and fire resides. 'Tis true, this Fire becomes easily an *Ignis Fatuus*, and evaporates sometimes, taking in within its Compass a Thousand vain Images; but when this Imagination is confin'd and govern'd by Judgment, 'tis certain that Piety may receive great Helps from it. For it is that which can turn this adorable Object, which we would love, on all sides, to shew it as infinitely amiable in all its Appearances.

The use of the Imagination is not to be rejected.

We must not therefore hearken to certain extravagant Devoto's, who will not allow the Imagination or the external Senses any Share in the exercise of Pure Love. *Nothing that is sensible* is to be admitted, say they. We say the contrary; for 'tis certain, That to excite the Motions impress'd, and to kindle the Fervours of Divine Love, the Imagination

tion is of great use, and consequently to Meditation; which is nothing else but the heat of the Imagination set on fire by him who is the principle of Love, by that Spirit which has so often appeared in the World in the form of Fire. But some will say, this is to admit the Machine of the Body into this Spiritual Operation; but what's that to the purpose, provided the Holy Spirit gives the Motion to the Machine? These Operations purely Spiritual, those pure Intellections, wherein the Machine of the Body have no share, do not belong to this present Life; and are scarce known to the common People. God has made us of Body and Soul, and he will have both the one and the other consecrated to his Service. To deliver the Flesh from the power of the Devil, to place it under the Dominion of the Holy Spirit; to banish from the Imagination, these vain and wretched Images which it receives from the Vanities of the World; to fill it with Holy Images of the Greatness of God, his Goodness, his Glory and his Reward, cannot but be very good and useful. The wise Pagans endeavour'd to govern their Passions, and make a good use of them. They did not approve of that Philosophy, which endeavour'd wholly to destroy them.

Christian Morality is not more severe, nor Grace Sanctions the Imaginations. It employs the Gold and Silver of *Egypt* for the building of the Tabernacle. And these Vessels which were formerly prophane and consecrated to an Idol, become Holy and Sacred in the hands of a Priest. The Passions, the Senses, and the Imagi-

Imagination, which have their Original in Flesh and Blood, being in the hands of Divine Love, the great Priest of our little Temples, become also precious Vessels and Instruments: Yes, Divine Love is that, and, as we may say, that only, which makes of our Hearts Temples for the Deity. Now this Priest does all his priestly Offices in these mystical Temples, he kills, he sacrifices all the Brutish Passions which are Vices; he burns them, and throws the Ashes into the Torrent of the Tears of Repentance. Among these Passions he retains those which are Innocent, and after they are purified with many Washings, he fixes them to the service of the Altar. Love, fear, desire, hope, grief, regret, &c. All these are admitted into the Composition of that Spiritual Worship which we render to God by the Hands of Divine Love; we must not therefore banish the Imagination, which is the source of our Passions, and the most noble of our Internal Senses.

Our Imagination does not corrupt the Notions we ought to have of God.

But can God who is Spiritual and Incomprehensible to pure Spirits, pass through our Imagination, since the Imagination forms only Corporeal Images? we shall therefore do an Injury to God, if we permit this gross Faculty to represent to us the Deity. This is the most specious Objection that can be made against us; but I pray you consider, That God who has forbidden us the use of Images in Divine Service under grievous Penalties, has nevertheless given to our Imagination a hundred Helps full of Images, to assist us in our Devotions. I speak not here of the Ancient

cient way of Worship about which some Exceptions may be made ; But I speak of the Evangelical Worship, wherein God represents himself as a Father who nourishes and brings up Children, as a Shepherd who leads and guides us, as Bread which we Eat, as Wine which we Drink, as a Rock from which flow the Springs of Eternal Waters ; Is there not need of the Imagination to receive the Representation of all these Images ? Is the purity of Worship injured by them ? Be ye therefore persuaded, that God does not refuse our Homage because there is something Corporeal in it ? For otherwise he would not require of us tears in Repentance, nor contrition of Heart, nor sharp Pains, nor cutting Remorse, nor Sighs, nor Groans, nor Songs of Triumph, nor expressions of Joy ; for all these depend upon the Machine of the Body, and the Imagination ; but God Wills them, he Commands them, and therefore they cannot but be very Good. *Offer to me, says he, your bodies a living Sacrifice, &c. Rom. 12. 1. which is your reasonable Service.*

We conclude therefore, That the Meditation which excites in us all these Ideas, which considers God under all sorts of Forms to make him appear amiable, is an exercise which belongs to true Love. Is it not necessary to know him that we may Love him ? And it is by Meditation that we know God. The Deity is a great Abyss which can never be search'd out to perfection. Say not therefore I know enough of God, *My Soul desires only to Love him : O foolish Soul, how wilt thou Love that which thou dost not know ?*

Thou must therefore know him, at least, in some degree : But I do know him, will the Soul say ; I have Meditated sufficiently upon him, and must now proceed to a kind of Contemplation, which is incomparably more perfect than Meditation. The Morality of the Gospel does not distinguish between Contemplation and wise Meditation : For to Meditate is to Contemplate God, as to all that is Beautiful and great in him ; and it would be great Rashness to think, that in a few Months one can examine these Beauties and Excellencies which have neither End nor Bounds. God the Object of our Meditations has no Bounds, may some say, but our knowledg has very narrow Bounds ; there is always something to be discovered in God, but our Soul cannot always make new Discoveries, and therefore it must stop at some part. This is what I grant, but then devout Souls know how to review the Goodness and Excellencies of God a Thousand and a Thousand times, and are so far from being disgusted with doing it, that on the contrary these Meditations are more pleasant the last time than the first.

Much know-
ledg seldom
agrees well
with the pure
Love of God ;

But Meditation, will the common sort of People say, who desire to be Devout, is not good, since only to make Men Learned ; we know God much more than we Love him. Experience teaches us, that the learned Schoolmen and Ecclesiasticks, who have thought and meditated so much upon God, are not always the most Devout : Nay, there are some who have arrived at that height of Impiety, by the way of Reflexion and Reasoning ;

soning; that their unhappy Reason, and their boundless Curofity have induc'd them to draw aside the Veil which was above these Abyſſes, at the brink of which Piety obliges us to stop and adore in ſilence. It muſt be confeſ'd, O Chriſtian Souls, that it is a ſcandal both to you and us; that the moſt learned are not always the moſt Devout. And it is not difficult to give the Reaſon of this; for true Devotion requires Recollection; and Study cauſes a great diſſipation in the Soul and its Faculties: It is employed upon many Subjects which it deſires to know; and if theſe Subjects are not God himſelf, they remove the Soul from God, altho' they might bring us back to God again if we did make a right uſe of them. The learned do not deſign to go to God by the knowledg of his Creatures. If theſe Subjects of their ſtudy are God, his Attributes and Actions, their mind conſiders them only as Objects of Speculation, and not of Practice. Now all Study which has not for its end the practice of Love, does rather withdraw the mind from God, than bring it nearer to him; and therefore the Scholaſtick Divines are rarely the moſt Devout. I muſt add here another Reaſon. Nothing is more oppoſite to the Love of God then Pride; *Knowledg puffeth up*: A Soul that is conceited of itſelf for its knowledg, is always void of God and of his Love: In ſine, we ſay, that Devotion and Divine Love are not the effects of Knowledg, but of Grace. God has revealed his Excellencies and his Goodneſs to ſimple Souls: *He has hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and*

*has revealed them to babes; even so father, for it seemed good in thy sight, Matt. 11. 25, 26. This comes not from him that wills, nor from him that runs, but from God that sheweth mercy, Rom. 9. 16. But does it follow from thence, Either, that every one Loves God only according to the degrees of his knowledg, or on the contrary, that the Devout Soul who desires to Love God above all things, ought to remain unactive, without motion, and without advancing in knowledg? Neither one nor the other does follow, for it is not true, that we Believe in God and Love him, only according to the proportion of Evidence, wherein he sets before our minds his Truths, his Excellency and Beauty. 'Tis sufficient that God gives us a very lively Sensation of his Truths, and of that which is amiable in him: *We must feel that the Lord is God,* and this is sufficient to make us love him above all things: But this does not destroy the use of Meditation and Knowledg; for 'tis certain that the Sensation of the Divine Perfection is assisted by Meditation, and fortified by Knowledg, when it is sought after with a submissive, humble and mortified Soul, which is perfectly resolv'd to throw itself into the Arms of God. This good God can never suffer a Soul which resigns itself up to his Conduct, which reads and hears his Word with Humility and Love, which is guided, not by Men subject to error, but by his Prophets and Apostles; He can never, I say, suffer such a Soul to Perish, and fall into the Snares of the Devil.*

Since we have undertaken to set before Devout Souls the helps to the Love of God,

we cannot pass over in silence, Supplication is a
 tion and Prayer, which are so united and great help to
 join'd with Meditation, that 'tis impossible Divine Love.
 to separate them in the practice of pure
 love; for a heart which is inflam'd by plac-
 ing before its eyes all the Beauties and
 Goodness of God does necessarily fly out
 towards God the Object of its Admiration
 and its Love; and this flying-out of the
 soul towards God, is nothing else but the
 most perfect Supplication.

Now Prayer is a great help to Divine Love: We Love to converse with those Persons to whom we have the greatest Inclination; but Prayer is our most intimate Communion with God, who is the Object of our Love. By it we see him face to face, in it we discover ourselves to him, and he reveals himself to us; by it we pour our sorrows and our tears into his Bosom, and by it we receive his holy Consolations: In it we consult him about our Doubts, and he Answers our Heart in the silence of our Passions: In it we throw ourselves into his Arms, and he receives us into his Bosom: In it we hear him speak of himself with his own Mouth, and our Soul is ravish'd to hear him whom it loves, who says to it, *Open to me, my Spouse, my well-beloved*; and it cannot be express'd how much this mutual Communion of the Soul with its God, and of God with a faithful Soul, increases and ties fast the Bands of Divine Love. Human Love has no greater support, nor more lively source of its flame, than the close Communion of a Soul that loves with the Soul which is beloved: Thus it is in Divine Love.

A Prayer.

O My God, I desire thee to consecrate all the Faculties of my Soul, why should I except my Imagination? Why should I leave my Meditations in a languishing State for a mistaken Scruple, which would Banish from the exercise of my Love all that belongs to the Body. My Imagination is foolish, I confess, and is capable of a Thousand Extravagancies; but for that very Reason I would put it under thy Conduct. Come therefore, O holy Spirit, thou source of flame, come and give fire and motion to my Imagination, that it may happily make use of all the Images which thy Saints and Sacred Oracles have furnisht me with; but when thou givest fire to my Imagination, give it also Fetters, hold always the Bridle in thy hand, and straiten the Reins, that this untractable Creature may not take the Bit into its Teeth, and so be at liberty to make such Excursions as may dishonour thee. Worldly Men think that Devotion, which is the exercise of the Love, corrupts the Imagination, and makes Men only Visionaries. O God, make it appear to the World, that thy Grace can Sanctify the Heart without corrupting the Integrity of the Spirit. To thee, O Lord, be Glory, Empire and Dominion, thro' all Ages, *Amen.*

C H A P. II.

The Second help to Divine Love, which is to place ourselves always in the presence of God.

THOSE who call themselves the great Teachers of Pure Love, make all their devotion to consist in placing themselves before God, and rendring him present by an Act of Faith, on purpose that they may love him, without doing any thing else. We will not amuse ourselves with enquiring, whether our Thoughts are to be approv'd or oppos'd; only we will discover some important Truths of Christian Morality, and draw them under them a Mystical Veil, which covers perhaps many false Imaginations.

The first of these Truths which we ought to know is this, That of all the Acts of Piety and Divine Love, there is not any one more essential, more Essential and more Necessary than this Act of Faith, by which a Man places himself in the Presence of God. God is plac'd before the Eyes of his Heart, he gives great attention to his Presence; he is livelily affected with this Presence; he trembles and shakes. This is an act of *fear*, I confess; for we cannot represent to himself this God who is a consuming Fire, who dwells in light inaccessible, who is incompart with Angels and Archangels, who holds in one hand a balance to weigh all the Sins of Men, and with the other the Thunder to punish them; who

To place God before our Eyes is an act universally useful.

who has the Keys of Hell and Paradise without being seized with a Religious horror. But 'tis also an Act of Love; for one cannot attentively consider the Presence of a Being infinitely perfect, beautiful, great, beneficent, merciful, the fountain of all imaginable Pleasures, without loving him. This is an act of Confidence and Hope, and consequently of Rest and Repose; since it is not possible to consider God present as we ought, unless we give great attention to his excellent Promises, which are more firm than the Heavens and the Earth; for the Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, but his words shall not pass away; which must necessarily produce a perfect peace and tranquillity in the Soul: In a word, this act of placing ourselves before God, and setting God before our Eyes, is an action universally useful, for there is not a Christian Virtue which does not result from it.

To place ourselves in the presence of God is a perfect Prayer.

We would willingly have this called Prayer, since we must not dispute about Terms while we agree about the substance of the Matter. What is it to Pray, and to pray in a most acceptable manner to God, but to be attentive to his Divine Presence, to represent him as looking into our Breast, as dwelling in our Heart, as acting in us, and working there the wonders of his Love and Grace, as observing and knowing all our most intimate and deepest Thoughts, to punish or reward them according as he shall find them good or evil. Such an Attention cannot possibly be given without Vows and Desires without Supplications and Prayers. For

ole Soul being possess'd with the thought of
ds presence, perceives in the twinkling of
Eye his Justice and his Mercy, his Power
his Holiness, and necessarily at the same
e makes Vows, at least implicitly, to
ase and serve him. We thus place our-
es before God, on purpose that we
y love him by knowing him, and also
h a design to be Loved by him, and to
der ourselves amiable in his Divine Eyes,
discovering our-selves to him as Good and
y: And consequently in this act of Faith,
re is a general Will and Desire to ren-
ourselves like to God, that we may be
red by him.

We grant that this is call'd an act, and an To place our-
selves before
God, is an ex-
cellent act of
Love.
cellent act of Divine Love, and in effect it
one. Worldly Men cannot sufficiently
emplate the Object of their Love; they
our it with their Eyes, especially for so
time as they do not attain the actual
ession of it. And even when they pos-
it wholly, as long as their Love lasts,
Object Loved never departs from before
r Eyes, and always fills their Imagina-
e, when it cannot fill their eternal Sen-
because of its Absence. And this is call'd
art of *Loving well*; why then should not
ine Love have the same Property? The
that is full of Thoughts, and Medi-
s deeply upon God, cannot cease to de-
the Possession of him; and while it waits
this full Enjoyment, it cannot but con-
plate and consider him: *I have set the*
always before me, for he is on my right
Psal. 16. 8. This is the exercise of true
Love.

Love. But God grant, that in this happy Contemplation we do not neglect the View of the Divine Attributes, and of all his Excellencies which are discovered to us: God grant that in this act of Love we do not set aside the Mysteries of our Redemption, and of the Incarnation of the Son of God; this is a Subject most comfortable to our Love. God grant that I do not set God before my Eyes as *the Sovereign good*, without looking upon him at the same time as *my Sovereign good*. God grant that in this close attention to the Presence of God I may not say, *My Soul desires nothing but to Love*; for on the contrary, by contemplating God, it desires all things; it desires to Love, to Believe, and to Hope; it desires to ascend up to this God who is the Object of its Love, and the Foundation of its Hope. And to this purpose these Thoughts, Reflexions, Reasonings and Meditations, which some pretended Wise men would Banish, are infinitely Serviceable.

Besides, this Duty of placing ourselves before God by a lively act of Faith, is of great Importance to the Practice of Divine Love, and of all Christian Morality, for we cannot think or speak too much of God for these two Reasons: The first is, That from the forgetfulness of God all our Immoralities proceed: The second is, That the forgetfulness of God is one of the strongest Temptations of the World and the Flesh.

The first of these Two Truths is very plain and sensible, *viz.* That all our Immoralities proceed from hence, that God is not perpetually before our Eyes. We may see

All our Immoralities proceed from hence, That we do not place ourselves in the presence of God.

strong Restraint against the efforts of Lust
the sight of Man is, and especially of those
Men who are grave and wise; for even the
most impudent Debauchees seek for secret
places to conceal their Uncleanneſs: If they
were always ſeen, they would always be
aſhamed; and therefore the firſt thing they
do that they may ſatiate their brutiſh Paſ-
ſions, is to baniſh all Witneſſes. Is it poſ-
ſible that we could fall into the meanest and
leſt of heinous Crimes and Sins, if we look'd
upon ourſelves as being always before God;
we conſider'd that neither the darkneſs of
the night, nor the thickneſs of Walls, nor
the greateſt ſolitude, nor even the moſt ſe-
cret corners of the Heart, can hide any
thing from his knowledg; *Whither ſhall I go
from thy Spirit? or whither ſhall I fly from thy
preſence? If I aſcend up into heaven thou art
there: If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art
there: If I take the wings of the morning, and
ſhall in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea, even there
thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall
hold me,* Pſal. 139. 7, 8, 9, 10. If, I ſay, we
always look'd upon God as preſent, as indeed
he is, there is no Heart ſo deſperately wick-
ed, but it would tremble and ſtop at the
ſight of the Abyſs.

But if we conſider that this God who is preſent hates all Sins, as well thoſe that are
ſmall as thoſe which are great, we would not
be ſo light of ſo many Impertinencies as
we are in Words, of ſo many Indecent
actions which we commit; of ſo many O-
missions which we take no notice of, and of
ſo many neglects as we fall into. If we were
before

To place
ourſelves be-
fore God,
reſtrains lit-
tle Sins as
well as great
Crimes.

before a great Person, especially if he were our Sovereign, we would not be seen to Dance sometimes with one Foot, and sometimes with another; we would not make grimaces, and use ridiculous Postures; and our behaviour would be grave, all our external carriage would show the due Reverence we have for the Prince: And yet before God who is the King of Kings, and in comparison of whom the greatest Monarchs are but Worms; we do a Thousand and a Thousand Actions, which perhaps do not absolutely destroy Grace, but at least they grieve the holy Spirit, by showing him that his Presence does not affect us, and that we have no regard to this Deity which has chosen us for his Temples.

We have already mentioned one of our Confessors, who was often taken from the Gallies and shut up in dark Prisons, where he spent many years in a frightful solitude. This Man was of the number of those who are called *simple*, without Learning, but he was of very good Sense, Pious, and no way suspected of Hypocrisie; whose mind could not be corrupted by Study, since he had never read any thing but his Bible, and some works of Devotion: Neither could he be so that was concern'd in the Visions of contemplative Men, with whom he never had any correspondence. This honest Man told us, That in his Prison, when he was deprived of all Company, and of all Conversation with Men, he applied himself for Consolation, to seek after God in his Solitude, and he found him; but it was with much difficulty.

and after many Doubts, Combats, and cruel Tossings. In fine, he was fully posselt of this Truth, that he was *not alone*, and that God was present at all which he did. And this Presence of God so strongly posselt his Heart and Imagination, that he could hardly resolve with himself, to do before God these natural and necessary Actions which we are ashamed to do before Men. It were to be wisht that all good Souls should be so posselt with the Presence of God, who is all Eye, as to stop and restrain these irregular Motions whereof God only is Witness.

This good Man was abundantly Reward-
d for the little Tortures, which seem'd to
e given him, by that God *whom he had always*
before him. For this God being present,
as more worth to him than a Thousand and
Thousand Comforters: He was never
doubled one Moment after he found his God;
e felt all these Joys which *pass all under-*
standing; He meditated upon the Mysteries
his Salvation with Ease; he Prayed with-
out Intermision, and without Weariness:
and when the time came that he was to be
at Liberty, he was more griev'd to see
himsel taken away from the Embraces of
God, then joyful to see himself restor'd
his Friends, to his Wife and his Children.
If the World could understand the Secret
placing themselves thus before God, I
st warrant it, that in a few Months it
ould be full of Saints in stead of those
rldly Men, which now compose it. If the
erchant would place himself in the sight of
l, before he enter'd upon the affairs of his
art I. I Traffick,

Traffick, he would never cheat nor be unfaithful to others. If he who governs the State, and judges Causes, should always have God before his Eyes, and consider himself as in his Presence, he would never fall into the meanness of Corruption, and into the Crime of Sacrificing the Interest of God to that of a wicked Policy.

A Prayer.

THOU seest, O my God, that I have a serious desire to Love thee, since I seek by all means to fix my mind upon thee, and to inflame my Heart. But alas, all my efforts have been hitherto unprofitable to my end. There needs nothing but to see thee and know thee, that I may Love thee; I will therefore place myself eternally before thee, that I may Love thee infinitely, and without Intermision. O charming Spouse of my Soul, place thyself before the Eyes of my Heart, and do not abandon me for one Moment; follow me, and go before me; let me always see thy Shadow, or rather thy Light; let thy gracious Presence comfort me; let the view of thy Justice make me tremble; let thy Mercy uphold me: *Let thy left hand be under my head, and thy right hand embrace me; conduct me into the Hall of feasting, and let thy banner over me be Love.* To thee, O my Divine Spouse, King of Kings, be Power and Glory, thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

Of the Temptations which withdraw us from God: And of the Remedies to these Temptations.

HAVING shewn of how great Importance it is to set God always before our Eyes, we must now consider how difficult it is: And how great the Temptations are, which sanctified Souls are to encounter upon this account, from the World and the Flesh; which Temptations incline a Man to forget God. This is a crime more common than can be exprest, but the most unaccountable of all Crimes. We understand very well, that the People who believe not in God, may easily forget him, if it be true that they are perfect Atheists: But since perhaps there are no such perfect Atheists, 'tis probable that those who profess this Impiety, have God before their Eyes oftner then we have. The Idea of a God who perhaps exists, and who being infinitely powerful, will one day severely punish them, follows them wheresoever they go, and disturbs them every Moment. But if they have compass'd the design, of extinguishing all the Evidence of a Deity within them, they will then easily forget him.

How great the Crime is of forgetting God.

It is also easily conceivable, that worldly Men who are immerfed in all sinful Pleasures, and who are besotted with them, while they forget themselves, should also forget him

who made them, because their Soul being fill'd every Moment with the Vanities of the World, can neither find place to receive the Deity, nor time to think upon him. But 'tis unaccountable that so many People educated in the School of Jesus Christ, hearing so often mention made of God, and having some kind of Faith that there is a Being infinitely Perfect, who is every-where, who does all things, should notwithstanding forget him; and that they should do this in the middle of an infinite number of Voices and Objects which declare this God.

From whence this forgetfulness of God proceeds. The first source of it is the Conspiracy of the World.

The Temptations which prevail with us to forget God, proceed partly from the World, partly from our own Weakness, partly from the depths of Providence; and lastly, from the Lusts of the Flesh. As to the World, it seems, that it has entred into a Conspiracy to make us forget God; for we go from Person to Person, from House to House, from one business to another, and never a one mentions God to us. On the contrary, we see there every one filling his Soul with the thoughts of other Things, as if it were on purpose to drive away the thoughts of God. The greater, the richer, and more populous the Cities are, the more People are found in them, who endeavour by all means to keep out of their minds any thought of God. They assemble in publick Places; they move and frisk about like a swarm of Bees in their Hive; they descend, they mount up; they turn to the right and to the left hand; they talk to one, and address another, about their temporal Interests:

rests

rests; they meet in places of Pleasure to refresh themselves, and God is not in all their Thoughts.

The Second source of these Temptations is our own Weakness; and the manner of our Composition, we are of the Earth, we dwell in houses of Clay; our secret Chambers are darkness and obscurity. Grace draws us out of this darkness by its attractives; but by our natural weight we easily fall back into it again; we are immersed in matter, and tied down to sensible Images: There must be a corporeal Action, to call to our mind the things which we would not forget, our senses must be struck with gross Images: Now God is nothing of all this; he is not material; he is not sensible; he neither strikes our Ears nor our Eyes; and hence it comes to pass that we forget him so quickly and so easily.

The third Temptation to forget God, proceeds from God himself, i. e. from his most wise and profound Providence: *The Lord my God is a God that hides himself*; he hides himself under the Veil of his Creatures. The machine of this World runs about, and we think that it turns all alone by itself, and that Nature is the only Spring of its motions. It appears to our Eyes, that human Passions do almost every thing, and that human Wisdom and Prudence do these other things which the Passions cannot do, so that there remains nothing for God to do. Besides, there is so great a depth in the Government of God, there are in it such Impenetrable Abysses and Mysteries, chiefly as

to the manner wherein he measures out and dispenses the goods and evils of this World, that those who are wise in their own Eyes, imagine it best for them never to think of them at all, but to cover these Objects with a Veil drawn over them. Thus they forget God by way of Reflection, and make it an Article of their Morality, never to fix their attention upon him. Perhaps they design only to abstain, from considering the obscure and unsearchable ways of the Deity, wherein they would not be much to blame.

'Tis probable that this was the Mystery of the Sin of *Cham*, which appears light, and yet was punisht severely. Rash Men who curiously enquire into that which God has a mind to conceal, do often make Shipwreck of the Faith; but those whom we now speak of go further, for the fear of finding in God something which embarasses, makes them continually banish the thoughts of God from their minds. Setting aside these obscure ways, there is in God much mildness and light, on which we should never cease to Contemplate.

The fourth
Temptation
to forgetful-
ness of God,
is Lust.

Lastly, The fourth source of Temptations which move us to forget God, is Lust. The darkness of our Ignorance, I confess, is very thick. The Walls of this House wherein we dwell are opac, and scarce allow any Passage for the light; but the darkness of our Passions and Lust is yet much thicker and more impenetrable. A Covetous Man being wholly taken up, with the designs he has formed to amass Riches at any rate whatsoever; an ambitious Soul who is swallowed

up in the glittering Images, of an high and honourable Post which he designs; or a voluptuous Man who is settled in the midst of his delights, and goes from one Object to another to find out sensual Pleasures; a revengeful Man who continually is contriving the means of taking revenge upon his Enemy, and of doing it either in an honourable way, if there be nothing to be fear'd from Men, or by Treachery, if there be ground to dread Retaliation. These People, I say, must of necessity forget God, and banish an Idea which embitters all these Pleasures, and crosses all their designs. And you, O faithful Souls, who labour to mortify these Passions and Lusts, do not yet feel that there still remains so much of them in yourselves as makes a thick Cloud, which deprives you every Moment of the view and thought of your God.

Thus I have given you an account of the Evil: But some will say to me, I pray you furnish us with Remedies against it. I will give you satisfaction, O ye faithful Souls, as much as our weakness will permit.

The first Remedy is, to understand the greatness of this Evil, and the heinous crime of *forgetting God*. To understand the greatness of this Evil, we must remember how great a good it is to think always upon God, and have him always present before our Eyes; and for this end we must review all the reflections of the preceding Chapter, wherein we have shewn the advantages of this act of Faith, whereby we set God before our Eyes, and the great Mischiefs which

The first Remedy against the forgetfulness of God, is to understand the heinous Crime of this forgetfulness.

proceed from the omission of this Duty: To all which we may add, That from this evil Custom of not placing God carefully and continually before us, proceed all our Indevotion, and chiefly our Distractions in Prayer. If we pray, if we meditate, if we read the holy Scripture, God is present with us, for the first minute we place ourselves before him; but within a quarter of an hour, or rather the next moment after, he is no more present; our Mind flies off from him; our Heart wanders even more than our Imagination; for Human Passions come and force us out of the Arms of our God: We use some endeavours to run after God, and to bring him back before us, but he stays not there long; he flies away still, and we remain in a sad and languishing Condition. Whence comes this but from the wicked Habit we have of forgetting God? If we would think of this Evil, and all those other Evils which cause the absence of God in us, we should never depart from under his Eyes, nor suffer him to depart from before ours.

The second Remedy is to enquire of all the Creatures for God.

The second Remedy against the forgetfulness of God, is to enquire for him of all the Creatures, and to be attentive to what they say of him to us. It is a Diabolical and Infernal Deafness, which hinders us from hearing these Voyces which come to us from all Parts: *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-works. There is no speech nor language in them, and yet their voice is heard, and their words to the end of the world, Psal. 19. 1.* Enquire of the Sun where is thy God? It will answer thee, I am

not

not he whom thou seekest for, tho' the Nations have vainly and falsely placed Divinity in me: The splendor of my Light, and the advantages which redound to them from my heat, have blinded their Eyes: Mount up higher, I am but a dark Image of him whom thou art to adore, of that God who is the source of my light and thine. All the Stars will tell thee the same thing, they will recal-
 lous the memory and thought of God, by declaring his Greatness, the infiniteness of his Power, the strength of his Arm which moves them, and the splendor of his Majesty to which their light is but feeble Rays. O my Soul, descend yet lower, come down to the Meteors and the Region of Rain; look upon all things on Earth round about thee, and thou shalt see nothing which does not speak to thee of God, even to the Worms and Flies; for God is so great in great things, that he is no less great in small things.

The third Remedy against the forgetfulness of God, is, by some holy Artifices to give ourselves occasion to think upon God: we must have a Signal to awaken the Heart out of its Drowsiness, and call it back from its Wandrings. This Signal may be composed of Passages and Texts of Scripture, which we may oblige ourselves to repeat often. As for Instance, there are many Texts of the Psalms proper for this purpose: *Awake, my soul; my heart tells me from thee, seek my face: thou seekest, O Lord, that I seek it. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after God; my soul is a-thirst for God.* These

The third Remedy against the forgetfulness of God, is to make a Signal for calling him to mind.

These words, and a Thousand others, which we may accustom ourselves to repeat often to our Heart, may call back God to our Thoughts; this Counsel may be practised several ways by devout Souls, who will make themselves other Signals: 'Tis no matter by what means they awaken themselves, provided they be roused out of their Drowsiness.

The fourth
Remedy,
Occasional
Meditations.
Joseph Hall.

Christian Morality gives us a fourth Ingenious Counsel, but nevertheless very real and useful; which is to use *occasional Meditations*, as a learned and pious Bishop among the reformed has called them. There is no Object in the World, nor any works of Providence, which may not afford a Moral Reflection, and bring us back to God. So many dead Persons as we see pass before us do as it were necessarily lead us to him whose years shall never fail. A flower in a Garden, wherein you admire the liveliness and mixture of the Colours, if you will make it an occasion of thinking upon God, may lead you to those infinite Beauties, and Immortal Excellencies, which are not confined to the duration of a Day. The view of a worldly Pomp, such as the Coronation of a King, the Marriage of a Prince, wherein all the splendor is exposed which Gold, Pearls, and precious Stones can have, to encrease human Beauties; these Pomps, I say, by setting before thy Eyes the emptiness and vanity of the World, will lead thee, if thou wilt, to the Divine Pomp, which encompasses thy God in the Heavens, attended by Angels, Archangels, and glorified Souls, who shine like so many Stars in the kingdom of their

Father

Father. This is enough to open the way of his Method ; there needs no more Examples, every one may make an infinite number of them without straining his Wit. If thou art Devout, without forsaking the works of thy calling, thou wilt find in thy domestick and Publick Employments, a thousand occasions of returning to thy God.

Many other Counsels may be given to this purpose; but I conclude with a Fifth, which is That we must not be daunted with difficulties. For the Devil perceiving that the want of Faith and Love, whereby we place ourselves in the Presence of God, is most fatal to his Empire, there is nothing which he does not employ and make use of to withdraw us from it ; but we must struggle hard against difficulties. *I sought him in the night-time whom my soul loves ; I sought him and I found him not. I rose up and went about the city and the streets, and broad-ways, to seek him whom my soul loves. The watchmen that go about the city found me, to whom I said, saw ye him whom my soul loveth : It was but a little that I was sed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth : I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceiv'd me.*

O holy Lovers of the Lord Jesus, in your languishing and sorrowful Nights, ye find the Object of your love near you : He is not away while you were a-sleep ; awake, rouse up yourselves, seek after him, and never give over, seek until ye have found him. The World will entice you, amuse you, and seduce you, to make you forget him whom

your

The fifth Remedy, to struggle hard against difficulties.

your Soul loves, and whom you ought to Love. When you have found him again embrace him, hold him fast; lead him into the Chamber of her who conceiv'd you. Shut him up in your Closet, engage him in all your employments, that he may never more escape from you.

The difference between thinking upon God, and placing ourselves before God.

I will conclude this Chapter, which perhaps is too long already, with giving you Advice, which is, That we must distinguish between thinking on God, and placing God before our Eyes, or setting ourselves before the Eyes of God. There is not a Christian of the meanest Rank, who does not believe it his Duty to think upon God, at least once or twice in a Day, at the time of Prayers; but this is not to place ourselves before the Eyes of God. We must remember that we have defined this Action, *An act of Love and Faith*, which renders God perfectly present to us; which makes us look upon him as a witness of all our Words, Thoughts and Actions; which has a general regard to his Attributes, and particularly to his hatred of Sin, and love to Vertue: In a word, thou must fully possess your mind with this Truth, *God sees thee*, and thou ought to look at him also. How many Christians are there who esteem themselves devout enough, without ever exercising this act of Love and Faith; and who content themselves with a superficial thought, that God is to be Invok'd; that he is the Author of all good things, and consequently that we must ask them from him.

A Prayer.

O My God, when I consider what happiness it is to possess thee, and what riches are found in the possession of thy Love, I am ravish'd into an Extasy. But I am afraid when I think of the multitude of my Enemies, who would rob thee of my Heart, and thereby render me eternally Miserable.

There is a Snare every-where: All Obstacles conspire to withdraw me from thy Divine Presence, and throw me into the World where thou art not to be found. O Lord, embrace thy knees; I put my neck under thy feet; I will not let thee go; I will never part with this Prize. But, O my God, embrace me, hold me fast, and so tye me to thyself that the Torrent may not carry me away: Hide not thyself from me; suffer me not to sleep in thy Bosom, for during my sleep the Enemy may come and take away my Treasure; keep me always watchful, always fixt to the thought of thy Presence, that it may never depart from me thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

The Third Help to Divine Love.

Of Mortifications, and Internal and External Tryals, necessary for the purification of Love.

IT is a Maxim in which all those who Write of Divine Love must necessarily agree, That pure Love, for attaining Perfection, must pass thro' the fire of Tryals and Temptations. This truth is so evident that it needs no Proof.

The Gold which is the Master-piece of Nature, how pure soever it be in itself, must pass thro' the Furnace and the Crucible for when it comes out of the Mines, it is a Mass without Beauty and without Shape. Rough Diamonds appear to be nothing worth; they must pass under the Wheel of the Lapidary, otherwise the splendor remains buried under dirt and Ashes. Divine Love, which is *more precious than the gold which is tryed by the fire*, is begotten in an impure Womb; this is the Masterpiece of Grace and the Holy Spirit: But the place where it is formed and conceived, leaves a thick grossness upon it, which is not taken off but by many Washings, and the Purifications which are made in the Fire of Mortifications and Tryals.

The

There are Voluntary Mortifications which men impose upon themselves; and many people value little these Mortifications, who perhaps are not altogether in the wrong. They say, that these Mortifications which men impose upon themselves, mortify on-
ly the Body, and do not purify the Soul from the internal Passions which hinder a perfect Union to the Deity; That the Mortification of the Soul, which consists in overcoming its Passions and extirpating Self-love, is the most excellent; that we cannot mortify the Soul by the Body, but 'tis easy to mortify the Body by the Soul; that in voluntary Mortifications, Self-love, and the Pleasure man takes in choosing for himself, makes these Penitents amends both for their Pains and severe Penance, and their Self-denial of sensual Pleasures, which they impose upon themselves. They add, That these severities are good for nothing, but only to weaken the Heart, and to fill it with bitterness and impatience towards our Neighbour, because these People have never tasted the sweetness of Christ's Yoke, nor that of Charity. That in these tedious Exercises they acquire a Disposition which is easily inflamed; these Penances being ill-managed, are the Fuel and Food of Self-love; that this kind of Devoto's commonly draw much Vanity into their austere Exercises, because, seeing few People follow them, they think themselves much distinguish'd from, and better than others. They say also, that the Remedies which the Sick apply to themselves are not commonly the best, because they

Of what use
voluntary
Mortifications
are, some
notable Reasons
against
Corporal
Mortification.

they not knowing the bottom of the Evil cannot apply to it fit Remedies: In fine they conclude, that the Persons who have practised all their life-time these Exercises and the other External Duties of Piety, after fifty Years, are still found void of God. Perhaps there is something out of Order within them; perhaps this is dictated by a Spirit of Laziness, which seeks for easy Devotions and loves not the rigour of Penance. Yet there is much Truth in what they say, to which they ought to give Attention.

What are the true Mortifications for the Passions.

As for our part we believe, That the Mortification necessary to purifie Divine Love is the Mortification of the Heart; and that the Heart is never so well Mortified, as when that which is most delightful to it is Ravisht from it. To mortifie a revengeful Heart, the devout Person must impose upon himself the necessity of doing good to his Enemies, of pardoning Injuries, and taking Pleasure in those Vexations which his Enemies are the Cause of. His Heart by this means will be made very sad, and much Mortified. The Heart that loves Pleasure must be fed with a dry and bitter Dyet, and with the deprivation of all worldly Pleasures. Pride and Self-love are mortified by a very sincere denial of ourselves, by Actions of a profound Humility, and by a perfect Renunciation of the World and its Pomps. 'Tis unquestionable that these Mortifications tho' Voluntary, are very effectual Purifications for Divine Love, which will plainly be made appear hereafter. If the true Believer feels, that Fasting and some Mortifications

tions of the flesh may be serviceable to him, let him use them ; but as to these things, let him be Master of himself, as to the use of them.

I come now to involuntary Mortifications, and these Tryals which are dispensed by the hand of God. He is the great and skilful Physician, he knows all the weakness and impurity of our Love, and therefore he applies the fire where it ought to be applied for the Purification of it. These purifying Tryals which are sent from God, are either External or Internal.

Of Involuntary Mortifications.

The External Tryals are Afflictions, which the Providence of God dispenses to those whom he Loves, to purifie their Love. It does not appear that the contemplative men have any great regard to this kind of Tryals ; they are for secret Tryals ; they discredit the Mortifications that are forc'd upon us ; they love not to endure a Prison, Pain, Shame, and a Cross for Christ. Our languishing Christians are almost of the same Opinion ; they think that their Love may very well want all these painful exercises which Providence sends unto them, wherein they are much mistaken : For these Mortifications which are at first very Involuntary, and consequently have little influence upon the Purification of our Love, become afterwards Sacrifices most acceptable to God, and Mortifications most effectual to purge Divine Love in us. Thus it is when we Sacrifice to God our Pleasures and our Joys, and seek no Pleasure and Joy but in the possession of his Love.

The Directions for Souls who are in this State do not properly come in here, because they would lead us too far from our principal Subject: Wherefore we shall now only treat of these internal Purifications, which the God of Purity and Mercy makes those Souls to undergo, whose Love he would perfectly purify. 'Tis unquestionable, according to History, and by the Relation of great Saints, that God makes the Elect Souls to undergo such internal Tryals as are very harsh and bitter; but that he never did any thing in his Saints which might be called Criminal, Impure, and essentially Evil; for this were Pollution, and not Purification.

The Anguish
into which
sanctified
Souls do some-
times fall.

'Tis very true that he permits in devout Souls, and those who earnestly endeavour after Holiness, such Faintings and Languishings as are infinitely painful to tender Consciences: For they being fully sensible of their Obligations to God, being perswaded of his Goodness and Beauty, which render him infinitely amiable, having an exact Knowledge of their Duty, and of the necessity they lie under to love God perfectly they are mightily troubled to feel that they do not Love him enough. To this we may add, the Sense they have of their Sins mean the Sins of Infirmary which do not destroy Grace, but confine it; which do not extinguish but abate the fire of the Holy Spirit. To this tenderness of Heart and Conscience, sometimes an unhappy and Melancholy Temper of Body are joyned; in which state it happens very often to the most pious Souls, that they are tryed by terrible Ven-

tions. Their little Sins appear to them enormous Crimes, they cannot satisfy themselves as to their external Behaviour, and much less as to their internal Motions; and so they have often before their Eyes the Idea of Hell, and the fear of Reprobation.

Grace suspends sometimes its Taste and Sweetness, and so abandons Souls to great Bitterness and Horror; and those Suspensions continue a long time, according as God sees that the Souls have need of these bitter Remedies. We see Martyrs in Prison, and most Holy and Mortified Souls, groan a long time under these troublesome Suspensions, and call often for the Comforter, saying, *O Spirit the Comforter, who was given to us by the Son, and sent by the Father, Remove not far from me, abandon not my desolate Soul as a Prey to these Horrors. Come quickly, O Lord Jesus, come, Open the Fountains of living Water, to extinguish the Fire which burns me, give me of thy Wine to refresh my Heart again.* But Jesus being invited answers not always, the Comforter being called comes not immediately; *I have sought in the night-time him whom my Soul loves, I sought him and I found him not.* What are those Nights but Days of Anguish and Sufferings, Nights wherein the Rays of the Sun of Righteousness, which bringeth Healing under his Wings, suffer a considerable Eclipse, if it be not total. *I sought him;* 'tis for this and the Sun does hide himself, that we may seek after him, and rouse up our Watchfulness. These Vexations commonly come after our Languishings of Love: Thus God to punish us for suffering the Fire of his Love

to be extinguished, permits those other flames to kindle in our Bowels, that they may corrode and devour them : *I was asleep, but my heart was waking* ; there remained therefore in the bottom of the Soul a habit of Love, which permitted us to say with Truth, *my heart was awake*. Divine Love was not then wholly extinguish'd, but nevertheless *I was asleep* ; I was negligent in the practice of all my Duties. And from hence it came to pass, that the faithful Soul awaking and reflecting upon its bad State, had a mind to return ; but then it found no more the Object of its Love : *My Well-beloved was gone* ; and thence proceeded its Anguish and Bitterness. *I run after him, I askt the Night-watch, have ye not seen my Well-beloved ?* In stead of Answering me, they beat me and tore my Veil. All the Reflections the Soul makes, and the Questions it puts to the City-Watch, serve only to vex and grieve, and tear its Bowels in pieces. We must not doubt but the Tempter is engaged in this Case, to frighten those Poor Souls who appear as if were abandoned. Sometimes he raises an uneasiness about the Faith, and doubts about the Mysteries of it, in the Souls that were most confirmed, and he says to them, *Is there a God who Judges on the Earth, and who governs the Heavens ?*

Holy Souls
cannot ordi-
narily fall in-
to apparent
Despair.

But 'tis not true, at least in the ordinary course of Grace, that God can abandon a Devout Soul to apparent Despair ; that such a Soul can carry for many Years the Impression of Reprobation ; and that it should believe itself so far destined to Damnation, that

it will not so much as suffer itself to be contradicted in this Matter. If this should happen to some of the true Saints, it must be attributed to a Disease in the Body, to a black Melancholy, and the fumes of an heated Bile. These are the Motions which proceed only from the Machine of the Body, and which God never imputes to us as a Sin; for in a Soul where Reason prevails, or the Imagination is sound, and the Will is free, Hope remains always. 'Tis true, that the Souls which are not Reprobate, do sometimes fall into great Terrors, and even into a kind of Despair; but 'tis because they have been defil'd with enormous Crimes, for the Purification of which, God suffers them to fall into a kind of Hell. But as to good Souls who fall into those Terrors, we repeat it again, that their Hope continues always: I do not mean a secret Hope in the Soul, but a *sensible Hope*, which speaks always to the Heart. It happens doubtless sometimes, that a good Soul goes so far as to say, *The Lord has forsaken me, my God hath forgotten me. The Lord hath changed the Arm which comforted me, he hideth his face from me. Is it for ever, &c. O my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* But a Soul thus desolate will Raise itself up and say; *A Mother may forget the fruit of her Womb, and the Child to which she gave Suck; but tho' this may happen, yet the Lord of Hosts will never forget me. Tho' the Mountains should melt, and the Hills be overturned, yet my Grace shall never depart from thee, Isai. 54.*

The faithful Soul seeks for its God during this night of Desertion, without finding

him; but nevertheless at last it finds him again: *I have found him whom my Soul loves, and I will not let him go.* Thus all those who have Meditated upon these excellent Prayers which we call the Psalms, have observed, that those Sacred Canticles whose beginning is full of Bitterness and Tears, end with Consolations and Songs of Triumph. What then ought a devout Soul to do in these Internal Tryals? It ought not to abandon itself to Despair, nor say, *since God would have me Damn'd, I am content.* Yet it ought not to stifle these wholesome Terrors all on a sudden, and at once; but it ought to suffer its Imagination to open Hell unto it, and to show all the Horrors thereof to the languishing Heart. Here servile fear will be found to be of use; but the devout Soul must not look upon Hell and its eternal Pains, as belonging to itself; for God can never abandon so far an Elect Soul which is sanctified by the Blood of Jesus Christ; and therefore it must consider Hell as a Punishment which may be inflicted upon it, if it does not keep itself firm and fixed in him who is the Rock of Ages; if it does not throw out its Anchors upon the brink of Eternity; if it does not drive away from the middle of his Temple these Trafficking, Covetous, Self-Interested Passions, which defile the purity of his Sanctuary, and the beauty of his Love. But it ought to be so far from refusing Comforters and Consolations, that it ought to seek after them, and cherish them when it has found them: Yet it ought to take good heed lest it deliver itself up into the hands of

those

those vain Comforters; of those who cure the wound of the people of God slightly; who call evil good, and darkness light. All places are full of these Doctors of Security; of these miserable Impostors who seek after nothing but easy Devotions; who have no other design but to lull the Conscience a-sleep, by taking from it the present sense of Pain. The best method is to fright and terrify ourselves with thinking upon God, with the greatness of our obligations and of our faults; to cover ourselves with a holy and wholesome confusion of Face, upon the sight of our Sins; but still we must not abandon our hope, but say with *Job*, *Tho' he should kill me, I will put my trust in him.*

Besides, That these Internal Tryals are of great use for the purification and perfection of Love, is a truth proved by Experience and by Reason: By Experience; for we see in the History of the Saints, that the Souls which are most improved in Love, are those who have pass'd thro' these Tryals. When a faithful Soul thought that its Treasure had been stoln away out of its hand, and it was found again, it was a Thousand times more enamoured of it, than if it had never been in any danger of losing it. The Spouse had always loved her Celestial Husband, and this languishing Love would not keep her awake. But when she perceived that she had lost the Object of her Love, all her fire was rekindled; and having found him again she stirr'd up all her vigilance that she might not lose him a second time.

'Tis easy to understand, that when one has viewed all the horrors of Hell, he will find the beauties of Paradise incomparably more Charming.

When a Soul has languisht in a sad and desolate Condition, and God comes to tell it according to its own Hearts desire, saying, *My Spouse, my well-beloved* ; then it feels that Peace which passes all understanding ; then it tastes the sweetness of Grace, and in some measure the pleasures of Glory. These transports of Joy, the sweet Tastes which cannot be express'd, are scarce communicated to any Souls of a common Rank, but are reserved for the great Saints, and chiefly for those who have been exercised with the Tryals I have just now described, and who have experienc'd the burnings of Divine Love : Such are those who cry out with a holy Rapture, *He is return'd ; he is return'd, he who revives my heart again.*

Nevertheless, in the conclusion of this Chapter we must forewarn you against rash Opinions ; for we must not look upon those as Christians altogether imperfect, whose Love hath never undergone these harsh Tryals. Grace exercises its Operations, with a Liberty and Variety which cannot be comprehended by us : It can, when it will, render Love most perfect without the use of frights and terrors ; and without doubt there have been great Saints, whose Soul was always like a calm Fountain, from which the Waters flow'd gently, and without Violence. Such are chiefly those whom God has preserved from gross Falls, and whose love and zeal have

have never been found in a languishing Condition ; but how few are there of this Rank ? The internal Peace which we see the greatest part of the faithful enjoy, has more of Security than true Confidence ; *for happy is the man who feareth always.*

A Prayer.

O My God, my Saviour, when I search my Heart and try it, I find in it so much languishing and lukewarmness, as should fill me with a wholesome fear. O just Judge, thou declares, *That thou wilt Vomit all the lukewarm out of thy Mouth :* What can I then hope, and what ought I not to fear ? Since I am most certainly one of the lukewarm. If thou throwest me out of thy Mouth, thou wilt also cast me out of thy Heart, and I shall be wholly separated from him, the possession of whom is my chief happiness. Why then are not my Languishings accompanied with Frights ? Whence comes this ? Is it that thou spares me, and would purify my Love without making it pass thro' the fiery Tryal, which thy Saints have so often pass'd thro', which made them cry out, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me ?* O my heavenly Spouse, if thou wilt pardon me all my unfaithfulness, without chastising me with these severe blows of the Whip, I shall count myself happy ; for I fear the anguish and horror of them as the greatest of all punishments. But in this case, send the fire of thy Spirit to supply the fiery Tryals ; and purify my Love from all the Impurities of the Flesh

Flesh and the World. To thee, O my God,
be honour and glory thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. V.

The Fourth help to the Practice of Divine Love, is to remove the Obstacles which may hinder us in the practice of this Vertue.

TIS certainly a great help to the practice of a Vertue, to remove the Impediments which may stop us in the practice of that Vertue: And therefore we may very well reckon among the helps to Divine Love those precautions which we ought to take, and those efforts we ought to make, for removing the Impediments we find in the way which should lead us to Divine Love.

To discourse of the Obstacles to Divine Love, is to open a field of a vast extent. Hell opposes this Divine Love with all its might, as being the greatest of its Enemies; the Devils conspire against it; and our Passions joyn with them in the Conspiracy; and the Objects which compose this Carnal World, mightily oppose this Love, either to hinder it from settling in a Soul, or to drive it from thence. This we may say of all our Passions; of all our Vices, and of all our Actions, when we consider them as Obstacles to Divine Love; and of all the Temptations of the Devil and of the Flesh, for they have all this design to force us away from the Love

love of God. But we will not engage in this way, which may lead us too far off, and therefore we will reduce what we have to say to two Articles. The first shall be, of the Impediments which may affect our mind; and the second shall be, of those which we meet with in the conduct of our Heart.

The Obstacles to Divine Love, which may affect our mind are, the infidelity of A-^{Herefy is an}Obstacle to
theists, and the incredulity of Libertines, the love of
w'd with their rash boldness. How were God.

possible to love God, if we do not believe God, and if we have not a right, just, and firm Faith of him? We must not only believe there is a God, that we may love him, but we must believe him such as he is, full of perfections, and composed of infinite Excellencies: And therefore the false Ideas which the Ancient and Modern Idolaters give us of God, by representing him to us under the figure of a Man or a Beast, and the opinions of our Hereticks who destroy the excellent perfections of God, are absolutely inconsistent with Divine Love, because they deny the Idea of a Being absolutely perfect. How can these Hereticks love this Being infinitely perfect, since they know him not; they make to themselves a God imperfect in respects, a God limited, a God impotent, a God who does not all that he would; a God ignorant even of that which is to come to pass tomorrow; a God who has not an infinite power to Sin, and who dare not, or cannot give eternal Recompences? How should they have a Love of infinite thankfulness for God, whom they do not acknowledg for the

The Libertines and great Wits are Enemies to the Love of God.

the only Author of the Good which is in them, and from whom they will not receive the precious Gift he has offer'd them, of his eternal Son for their Redeemer?

If there are any tempers of mind which are yet more opposite to the settling of the Love of God, they are those which our Libertines and great Wits endeavour to produce in us; who by Writing and word of my Mouth, draw a black, frightful, and impenetrable Veil over the knowledge of the Saints. They are not Atheists, as they say, but under pretence of believing nothing but what is evident, they bring us to doubt of all Things, even of the most important and saving Truths. They propose to us every thing which may throw us into Atheism. They open the Abysses of the Wisdom of God of his Predestination; of his Providence; his Grace and Government, on purpose to throw us into them. They abuse the sincerity of the wise and pious Doctors of the Church, who confess that Human Reason cannot find out ways to extricate themselves out of these difficulties they meet with these Subjects: In fine, they forget nothing which may throw us into these Depths, the brink of which the Church exhorts Children to prostrate and adore. We may enquire after Remedies for so great an Evil.

The first Remedy against the Spirit of Libertinism.

The first is, to shun carefully all Communication with these People and their Works. They are more to be fear'd a Thousand times than those who have the Plague, whose approach creates a Horror in us. They are the Poysoners of Souls, who prepare the

Poy

pyson with Honey and Sugar ; who
 eefs up their Impurities with every thing
 hich may Charm both the Mind and the
 eart: Whosoever comes near them admires
 em: He who admires them quickly Loves
 em; and he who Loves them follows and
 itates them, if not in every Thing, yet at
 st in too many Things: And therefore to
 oid wholly this infectious Evil, we must
 move from the Centre and Source of the
 ntation. The same Counsel is to be given
 d followed, as to the Persons and Books of
 erticks, who by the false Ideas they give
 of God, are capable of destroying our
 ith, and extinguishing our Love. Those
 ctures are not allowed to be heard by any,
 t those who are called to refute Heresies.

The second Remedy is, to possess our
 nds thoroughly with this Truth, *There is a*
 , and to give great attention to it. Now
 is not difficult to possess ourselves with
 s Perswasion ; the way to arrive at it, is
 t that of Disputation ; *i. e.* it is not that
 olophony which examines *pro* and *con* the
 guments against Atheism, and the Ob-
 ions of the Atheists. Right and strong
 ason may arrive at the Truth by this way,
 onfess, but the Obliquities of Human Rea-
 are infinite ; the Objections of the Im-
 us are Specious ; false Philosophy makes
 n Atheists, by appearing to oppose them.
 Science is the Science of Saints, and not
 t of the wise of the World ; for it hath
 ased God to make the wisdom of the
 orld foolish, by the foolishness of Preach-

The second
 Remedy a-
 gainst the
 Spirit of Li-
 bertines.

The

The way to arrive at the certain knowledg of the Truths necessary to Salvation, that which we have called the way of *Sensation* and Taste. This Sensation and Taste is found in the frequent, pious, and attentive reading of the Sacred Books of the Prophets and Apostles, and in the Contemplation of the Works of the Creator. No Man did ever read the Books of Nature and Grace, but he found God deeply engrav'd on them. Do not contemplate, O ye faithful Souls, the World, and the Parts of which it is compos'd, with a Spirit of mere Curiosity; but search there for the Marks and Signatures of a Sovereign Understanding, a perfect Wisdom, and a boundless Power, and ye will find them there. *The World, for a wise Pagan, must needs be made by a great Understanding, since it cannot be yet known or understood, but by a great Understanding.* Offer no Violence to your Mind, follow the first Impressions that are made by the Objects, and 'tis impossible but these first Impressions will lead you to the knowledg of a Being infinitely perfect. The wise Pagan just now mentioned, says also, after another Philosopher, That if a Man at his Birth were placed in a deep Cave, where he had never seen any other Light but that of a Torch, and that nevertheless he had been Taught in it the right use of his Reason, but without telling him how the World was made: If this Man should afterwards be brought above Ground to see the Light of a clear Day, followed with a Night where a Thousand and a Thousand Stars did sparkle

Cicero de
nat. Deor.
lib. 2.

in the Heavens, he would be overwhelmed with the sight of all these Beauties, and presently would find in them, without searching, this Being infinitely perfect, which our rash Wits lose sometimes in searching after it. If ye follow the first Impressions, all the Creatures will tell you that there is a God, and that nevertheless they are not God, since there is not any among them who has the least appearance of an infinite Being, and a Being infinitely perfect. For the true God who reserves this Honour to himself alone, has left everywhere sensible Marks of the Imperfections of the Creatures. A Collection of imperfect Things, can it ever make a Being infinitely perfect, as many of our Impious People say to this Day? This implies a Contradiction, that Imperfection added to Imperfection should make at last an Infinite Perfection.

There are not any of these Disorders of Providence, that are pretended by the Libertines, and made use of to blacken the Idea of God, which do not serve to confirm it. There are, I confess, many Confusions in Human Society, Human Passions which reign there cause strange Disturbances; and yet the World is preserved in spite of all these, in the midst of these great Confusions. And is not this an evident Proof that there is an infinite and supreme Understanding which presides over the Waters of this Deluge? Thou seest upon the Brink of the Sea a Vessel cruelly toss'd with a Tempest, which has neither Sail nor Anchor, nor Cordage, and which has not preserved so much as its

The Objections of the Libertines against Providence serve to confirm it.

its Helm; if this Vessel amidst the Waves which make it rise up to the Clouds, and descend alternatively into the Abyfs, does notwithstanding by little and little approach to the Harbour; if it avoids the rough Blasts of the Wind, and bends to the right or to the left-hand as necessity requires; thou wilt not say that this Vessel is without a Governor: But on the contrary, thou wilt be perswaded that there is in it an excellent Pilot who by his great Skill preserves this Vessel which is almost half-broken in pieces, from Shipwreck. Let us therefore acknowledge also, that this World which is so cruelly toss'd with the tempests of Human Passions does not subsist, and is not preserved, amidst these violent Agitations, but by the strength and will of that supreme Understanding which is within the Bowels of this Machine.

An Application of the preceding Remedies to the Evil of which we Treat.

When once a devout Soul is perfectly possess'd of this Truth, *there is a God*, it will have done all that is necessary, and then will easily Conquer all the difficulties which the Libertines would embarrass in Faith, to extinguish its Love: For if we believe a God, we must be perswaded that he is Eternal, and infinitely Perfect; and if we understand him to be infinitely Perfect, we shall not leave any Imperfection in him, neither in his Essence, nor in his Attributes, nor in his Knowledg, nor in his Power, nor in his Sovereignty, nor in his Independency, nor in his Properties, nor in his Actions; but we shall carry on all these even to Infinity. More especially we shall be perswaded that he can neither Change, nor Lye, nor Deceive

nor be Deceived ; and therefore we shall receive with a profound Submission the Revelation which comes to us from God.

And whenever the Libertines shall offer to us their profane Objections, we shall always have a Buckler in our Hand ready to oppose against them : I believe that there is a God, will the Soul say, and that this God is Infinite, and infinitely Perfect. Ye represent to me many things in Providence which are Incomprehensible : Ye show me that my God is almost always overcome, and the Devil his Enemy is always Conqueror : Ye would entangle me in that profound Dispensation of a God, which suffers so many Evils that he could hinder. This would create me much trouble, I confess, if I did not understand that my God is Infinite, and that I am Confined within narrow Bounds. I do not understand his Essence, and why should I think to comprehend his Actions, and the depths of his Administration ? He is infinitely Wise, Just, Holy and Good ; this I know, this I believe. How this or that does agree with his Wisdom and Holiness, I ought not curiously to Enquire : But I stop at the Brink of the Abyss ; I suffer myself to be guided by the Spirit of Grace and of Faith, which confirms me in the belief of things which are not seen. Thus the Pious and Christian Soul may remove this first Obstacle, which our Libertines lay in the way to hinder the Establishment of Divine Love.

The Second Rank of Obstacles which the flesh Opposes to Divine Love, is in the Heart and Will. This Rank consists of all

The Obstacles to Divine Love, which proceed from the Heart and Will: 1st, The Violent the Passions.

the prevailing Passions, the reigning Vices, and our other Loves. I do not pretend to enlarge upon any of these Articles, this, as I have told you, would lead me too far from my Subject, and would oblige me to make several Repetitions ; and hereafter we shall have Occasion to Treat more largely of them. I will only now say, that violent Passions are Mortal Enemies to the Love of God ; he who abandons himself to them, shall never arrive at the Perfection of Love, for Love never settles in the Heart but by the favour of Peace and Tranquillity. Divine Love, as we said before, is a Painter which draws again in us the Image of God, the Object of our Love. O faithful Man, if thy Soul has the Firmness and Purity of Chrystal, Divine Love will easily paint in it the Image of thy God. If thou art like the Sea in a profound Calm, thy Sun darting his Rays upon the Surface, will make thee shine with a Thousand and a Thousand Beauties : But if thou be like a Troubled Sea, thou wilt become frightful, and be covered with froth, filth and slime ; compose therefore thy Mind, and silence thy Passions. For a Soul torn in Pieces by Envy, enflamed with Anger, devoured by a revengeful Spirit, passing from one Passion to another, as it were from Rock to Rock, shall never come near perfect Love.

2d. The
reigning
Vices.

If the Passions which are but a slight Storm and quickly pass away, are so great a hindrance to Divine Love, what shall we say of these reigning Vices, of the habitual Sin which resist our Prayers, our Exhortations, our Threatnings and our Promises ; the

are adhering Impurities, which can no wise in the World subsist with Pure Love. A Thousand and a Thousand People unhappily flatter themselves, and congratulate themselves for their Faith and Love; but they are always Debauched, Disorderly, Vicious, and shew no Pity nor Compassion to the Miseries of the Poor. They shall know one Day, but when it is too late, that the good Corn does not grow in the midst of Thorns; and that Light and Darknes may sooner be Reconciled, than reigning Vice can be Joyned with pure Love.

Lastly, The Third Obstacle which hinders ^{3d. The other} the Establishment of Divine Love in the ^{Loves.} Will, is the other Loves, *i. e.* Self-love and the Love of the World; of which we have many things to say hereafter, and consequently we shall say nothing of them at present. I have but one Advice to give, which is, That it is not possible not to love the World, when a Man is Immersed into it, and Tastes of all its Pleasures; nothing but a Retreat from it can save us from the Hands of this Tempter. And therefore, O ye faithful, when ye see a Christian Worldly-minded, who denies his Senses nothing, who seeks after all kind of Pleasures, and shuns all Mortifications, ye may say, that such a one knows not yet what the Love of God is, and we need not be afraid of making a rash Judgment in this Case. When I see some Persons who have escap'd out of great Tribulation, and who bring the World along with them to us, I confess I tremble for fear of their Salvation, who cannot leave off their

L. 2 Pleasures.

Pleasures. But perhaps they will say, that they are innocent Pleasures : yet when they are perpetual, when they follow them without Intermission, they leave no time for Recollection, they scandalize tender Consciences ; and this is bad enough. God grant that those who have gone astray may be fetch'd back again, that those who are in the right way may be confirmed, and that those who are yet blind in their Conduct may have their Eyes open'd.

A Prayer.

THY Love, O my God, is thy Work in my Heart ; and a Thousand Enemies of my Repose and thy Glory, seek to destroy this Work. Keep, O Lord, carefully this Treasure, suffer not the impious to Rob me of it. Give me always a lively Sense of the Truth of thy Existence, that may never come near the disposition of the Fool who says in his Heart, there is no God. I can never use this Infernal Language as long as I feel thee in the middle of my Heart ; There is a God, will I say, for I feel him ; he is within me, he is in me : And thus believing thee firmly, I will also love thee infinitely. *The Devils believe that there is a God and Tremble.* As to me, I believe that there is a God, and rejoice at it with Joy unspeakable. Continue, O my sweet Redeemer, render thyself present to my mind by thy light ; to my Heart, by the sweetness of thy Grace ; to my Imagination, by the Holy Images of thy infinite Perfections ; to my

Will, by the power of thy Attractives; to my Passions, by the strong restraints which will stop their impetuous Motions; to my Desires, by alluring them with a sweet and invincible Violence. To thee, O Father, Son and Holy Ghost be Honour and Glory for ever. *Amen.*

The End of the first Part.

L 3

A Ta-

A
on
P
m
th
RT
in
L
R
W

A
TABLE
OF THE
CHAPTERS
IN THE
First Tome.

A Pastoral Letter to the Souls who are affected by God, and sensible of the Afflictions of the Church; To convince them that the Practice and Meditation of Divine Love, is the most overflowing Source for Consolation, of all those that can be opened to Afflicted Souls.

ARTICLE I. Six Duties of a persecuted Church; in the practice whereof it is assisted by Divine Love.

ARTICLE II. Seven effects of Divine Love, which dispose us to Patience and Perseverance.

A TABLE.

The First Part of the Treatise of Divine Love.

A Prayer of the Author for himself, wherein he begs the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

Page 1

CHAP. I. Two general Considerations about Divine Love. 2

II. What Divine Love is ; A general Idea of this Vertue 3

III. God is light without a figure 5

IV. Five principal Features which compose the Divine Beauty 16

V. The Goodness, Gentleness, and Benefits of God, another Motive to Divine Love 26

VI. The Devout Soul ought to find a Motive to Divine Love, even in the Afflictions which God sends upon it 37

VII. That we may Love God we must know his Goodness by Taste and Sensation 43

VIII. New considerations which will serve as Motives to Divine Love 53

IX. God alone can render thee Love for Love 56

X. The Love of God transforms us into God 58

XI. Divine Love works in us great Changes 62

XII. Divine Love works in the faithful Man the Pleasure and Joy that he has 69

XIII. Divine Love ennobles the Soul, and renders it greater and larger 74

XIV. God is our proper Good 77

XV. The excellency of Divine Love 81

XVI. Of the excellency and Beauty of Divine Love 81

A T A B L E.

A Continuation of the First Part. Of the Helps to Divine Love.

- CHAP. I. *Of Meditation, Contemplation and Prayer; the first help to Divine Love* 96
- II. *The second help to Divine Love, is to keep our selves constantly in the presence of God* 107
- III. *Of the Temptations which withdraw us from God, and of the remedies to those Temptations* 115
- IV. *Of Mortifications, and Internal and External Tryals, necessary for the Purification of Love* 126
- V. *A Fourth help to the Practice of Divine Love, is to remove the Obstacles which may hinder us in the practice of that Vertue.* 138
-

THE

Pi

D

f
l

T

hy
efc
Ve
ag
me
ax
at
ve
t

T H E

Practice of Devotion;

O R,

A T R E A T I S E of
D I V I N E L O V E.

P A R T II.

of the Degrees and Characters of Divine Love.

THIS not sufficient to know that we ought to Love God, and the Reasons why we should Love him; which we have described in the first Part of this Work: We must also learn the manner in which we ought to Love God; and what are the true Characters of Divine Love. The chief Maxim of Evangelical Morality, as to this matter, is very well known: *God is to be loved above all Things.* But nothing is more to instruct us in this Case than the Commandment

mandment of the Sovereign Law-giver himself: *Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy Strength, and with all thy mind.* This Commandment discovers to us five degrees of Divine Love. First, We must Love God with the Heart: Secondly, We must Love him with all our Heart. Thirdly, We must Love him so as wholly to exclude the Love of the World. Fourthly, We must Love God, so as to prefer him infinitely to all the most excellent Creatures. Fifthly, and Lastly, We must Love him more than ourselves, more than our dearest Interests; more than our own Senses; more than our own Will; more than our own Excellency. This will lead us to Meditate upon the five great Evangelical Sacrifices which we are to make either to Divine Love, or by the Hands of Divine Love.

CHAP. I.

The First Degree of Divine Love: We must Love God with all our Heart.

THE Apostle St. John told his Disciples, *My little Children, love not in Word and in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth*: Which Love fixes its Seal in three Places. I suppose that we may Love in Tongue, and not with the Heart. In effect Love seems to have fixt its Seat in Three Places. In the Mouth, or upon the Tongue, in the Hands, and in the Heart. The First Love is commonly False; the Second Equivocal; but the Third is always True. The First Love, which is that of the Tongue, is commonly false; for Words which were given to Man to communicate and discover his Thoughts, are now become a Veil to cover them. How many People are there who say, *I love you*, and yet labour to Destroy you, at the same time when they protest that they Love you always. And altho' God cannot be Deceived by Men, yet Hypocrites will not cease to give to God great Praises, and full assurance of a flaming Love, which proceeds not from Heart full of Divine Love, but from Fear and Self-love. The Love of the Hands and our Works has something yet more certain, but nevertheless there is many times elusion in it also. There are some Men who exhaust themselves in Gifts and Offerings, and yet do not truly Love God. True Love therefore may very well begin with the Tongue

Tongue and Homage of the Mouth ; and then it ought to Advance, and pass to the Hands, and discover itself in all sorts of good Works ; but it ought to have its Source in the Heart, and therefore God says by the Mouth of the Wiseman, *My Son, give me thy Heart.*

The Relation there is between the Heart and Divine Love; they are made the one for the other.

There are certain Relations between the Heart and Divine Love, which plainly declare that they are made one for the other. The Human Heart is made for Divine Love, and Divine Love is perfectly agreeable to the Heart. What Love is among the Vertues, the Heart is the same among the Members and Faculties of a Man. The Heart is the Centre of our little World, and possesses the middle place of the Body : Divine Love is the Centre of all the Divine Vertues, they all tend towards it, as the Reflections we have made in our First Part demonstrate. The Heart is the principle of Life ; the first Part that Lives, and the last that Dyes. The Love of God is the great effect of Grace, and the cause of all the Motions which carry us towards Heaven ; without which we should be Dead in Sins and Trespasses, and have no appearance of Life. By this we begin the great Work of our Salvation, and in it we find a perfect Consummation of this great Work. The Heart being placed in the middle of the Body sheds its influence upon all the Members : Divine Love being plac'd in the middle of all the Christian Vertues, by an happy Irradiation inspires them with all they have that is Excellent and valuable. It Rules and Governs them, and

great Soul Guides and Governs a whole Body. The Heart of Vertues must be plac'd in the Heart of the Soul: If it were in the Tongue it would govern only the Words: If it were in the Sight, it would Govern only the Looks: If it were in the Hands, it would have an influence only upon the Actions: And therefore this Universal Vertue must have its Seat in an Universal Faculty, as a Sovereign has his Habitation in his Capital City, and his Seat in his Council among his Wife-men.

The Heart is the Seat of the Affections and Lusts, which are a Mutinous sort of People, who are always contriving to Revolt, and talk of returning into *Egypt*, and therefore Divine Love ought to fix itself in the middle of this Rebellious People, on purpose to Restraine them. God has not been pleas'd to deliver us from all our Passions; Grace is contented with subduing them. Our *God* designs not to Destroy the *Gibeonites*; he thinks it sufficient to Disarm them, and to use them in the Service of the House of God, as Hewers of Wood, and drawers of Water. The Passions are not useless to Vertue, when he knows how to Govern them well; and this is the Office of Divine Love. An *Israelite* who Married a strange Woman, was oblig'd by the Law of *Moses* to cut her Hair and her Nails, before he received her into Bed. So a faithful Soul who would make good use of his Passions, ought to cut off all their Impurities and Superfluities. This is what Divine Love does; it is a mild and delicate Vertue, which Sweetens and Tames these

Divine Love
ought to
have its
Seat in the
middle of
the Passions.

these Wild Beasts; which pulls out the Teeth and cuts off the Nails they make use of for Anger, Hatred, Jealousy, Ambition and Covetousness, which knows how to turn them to the Right-side, and change their Nature by changing their Object, by giving to the Soul the same Hunger and Ardent Desire of Spiritual Riches, which it had for Carnal Riches.

The Heart is the Seat of the Understanding, and of the Will; and to speak more properly, the Heart is nothing else but the Understanding and the Will itself. Divine Love therefore ought to be plac'd in the middle of the Heart, to Encourage, Advise and Conduct these Two Faculties, which are the Rulers of Mankind, and of the World. Nothing is more Dark than an Understanding without Divine Love; nothing is more Irregular than a Will which does not Submit to this Divine Love. Miserable and Blind is that Learned Man who has fill'd his Mind, with the Notions he has been searching for in all Parts of the World with Pious and Religious Efforts; he calls this Science, but it is a Science that serves only to puff up. *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity Edifieth.* Divine Love therefore must be placed, between this Understanding which is fill'd with many Ideas, and the Will, to hinder the Heart from being puff'd up with Wisdom. *Tho' I should speak with the Tongue of Men or Angels; tho' I should understand all Mysteries and have not Charity, I am in the sight of God as a Sounding Brass, or a Tinkling Cymbal. A Word without Power.*

1 Cor. 13.

Wise-Man, who by his Study and Practice as possess'd his Will of those Habits, which are called Moral Vertues, may pass in the World for an Honest Man, for a Vertuous and Wise Man, he shall be, if you please, theocrates of his Age; but without Divine Love he will never be truly a Christian. His Vertues, which are produc'd only by Self-love may be useful to Society; but they can never please God, who will not accept any Obedience which does not proceed from a Principle of pure Love, and which is not freed from Self-Love. Divine Love therefore must necessarily be plac'd in the middle of the Heart, between the Will and the Understanding, that so this Love may shed and send forth its sweet-smelling good Savour before God, and render all the Homage of the Soul acceptable to him. Divine Love is Fire which Shines and Burns; place it therefore in the bottom of thy Soul, that it may shine upon thy Understanding, and burn upon thy Heart: *Did not our Heart burn within us when he spoke to us, Luke 24.* Thus thou should'st say when Divine Love speaks to thee, dictates thy Duty, and instructs thee.

A Prayer.

MY Heart is made for thee, O my God, and thou hast made it only for thyself. It belongs to thee, and all the Creatures should have it: They wou'd Ravish it from thee; they carry it away, and I am no longer Master of it. O Lord, suffer not this Rape,
 Part II. M Retake

Retake the Heart which thou hast Created in me; and after thou hast restor'd it to me give me thy Spirit to Guard it, that it may never more be taken away: Restore it to me perfectly Clean, but not altogether Empty. An Empty Vessel, and which was never us'd is commonly clean; but it is quite otherwise with the cleanness of the Heart, it must be full, that it may be clean. O Holy Spirit thou free Spirit which sustains me, fill the Heart with thy precious Spices. O Southerly Wind, blow into my Garden, and let the Spices Distil upon me; blow, and blow Eternally, that this happy Wind may conduct me to Eternity, to enjoy thy glory through all Ages. *Amen.* So be it.

CH A P. II.

The Second Degree of Love.

*We must Love God with all our Heart
and above all Things.*

We can't
give our
Heart to
any other
thing but
God.

WE are oblig'd by the Commandment of the Law-giver, to Love God with all our Heart, with all our Understanding, with all our Strength. Never was any Commandment founded upon better Reason, yet was there never any less Practis'd. Dividing of the Heart is injurious even between Man and Man; for a Man wou'd not sell it whole and entire, especially when

has done something which is call'd Merit in the World, and when he has done great Service to the Person who Loves. Certainly the Heart of Man is too little for God, and therefore we shou'd be very Unjust if we shou'd desire that he wou'd content himself with one Heart only, and that he wou'd love us alone, excluding all Others. But this same littleness of our Heart is a good reason why we should not divide it between God and any other Object. To whom shou'd we give this Heart? Shou'd we give it unto the World? But that is the most Dangerous, and most Treacherous of all our Enemies. Shou'd we give it to Sin? but that is a frightful Monster that deserves all our hatred. Shou'd we give it to the Vanities of the World? But these are only Shows and Shadows which deceive us, and delude our Senses. Shou'd we give it to Riches? But no Man is oblig'd to give his Love to that which he has: The Rich do not possess their Riches, but they are possess'd by 'em; and therefore Riches ought to love the Man if they had a Heart; but the Man ought not to love Riches. The greatest part of Men are very far from being Rich, and those who are so, entangle themselves in terrible Difficulties when they Love their Riches: were there no other Evil that attends them but the difficulty of Dying. To Dye is a Work necessary and unavoidable; but difficult is this great Work to him that is among his Worldly Goods, not to possess 'em but to be possess'd by 'em? O my Soul, consider the same thing of the Honours and Pre-

M 2

ferments

ferments of this World. Thou hast them not; thou must therefore be miserable to Love that which thou hast not, which thou perhaps will never have, and which thou cannot have. And tho' thou should'st have 'em, to Love 'em, is the surest way to Lose 'em, and to go to Hell with the wicked Rich Man, and to find thy Lot with Tyrants. How can it enter into the Mind, that God can suffer such Rivals, and divide a Heart with 'em? *Jealousy is Stronger than Death, and more cruel than the Grave.* God is thy Husband, O my Soul, but he is a Jealous Husband, who does not conceal his Jealousy; and who says, *I am the Lord thy God, a God strong and Jealous*: I will do good to a Thousand Generations of those that Love me, but I will punish to the Fourth Generation the Unfaithfulness of my Spouse. Be gone therefore O my Soul, remove thyself whole and entire out of *Egypt*. *Moses* wou'd not have People to leave in *Egypt*, a Hoof of a Beast. *Jesus* wou'd have thee not to leave a Heart of thy Passions in the World, and among Creatures; take all with thee, escape into the Desert, and give all to God. A Fire being well-kindled takes hold of all the Proportion of the Combustible Matter, it is of as large Extent as its Subject. Thy Love is a Fire, it must be fixt to its Object, and entirely here to it; that it may be of the same Greatness and Extent. God is an infinite God, and thy Love must also be without Bounds. There must be no strange Fire in Divine Service, this cost *Nadab* and *Abihu* their Lives. Such is the Love of the Creat

when it is mingled with the Love of God; it sheds upon all the Parts of Worship such a Stain, as renders it Contemptible, and which makes God to have no Regard to it. Take good heed therefore, O my Soul, and if thou would'st be loved by God, Love God, and him only. But these Considerations being only General, are insufficient; let us therefore descend unto Particulars, and say that God requires our Love without Sharing it with the World, the Creatures, or Ourselves.

A Prayer.

UNJUST Pharaoh wou'd divide with thee, O my God: He who cannot have all my Love, endeavours to keep a Part of it, that the rest may be nothing worth, and that thou may wholly forsake it. O my God, suffer it not to be so; my Heart is a noble Part, and the Seat of Life; it can't receive a Wound but what is Mortal, and cannot be cut and divided without receiving such a Wound as can never be Cur'd: It is a Garment without a Seam, which the Executioners of Jesus Christ respected so much that they tore it not. Do not therefore suffer, O my Saviour, this Heart where thou desirest to dwell, to be Wounded or torn in Pieces: Keep it for thyself, and keep entire, that I may also possess the Heart my Eternal Spouse whole and entire. All Saints will possess it also whole and entire, but undivided; I will have it all, and others shall have no less of it. To thee,
M 3 who

who art the Eternal Object of my Love, be
Honour and Glory through all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. III.

The Third Degree of Love.

*God would have all our Love, with a total
Exclusion of any Love to the World.*

The World
ought not to
be the Object
of our Love.

AS to the Love of the World, 'tis an
undoubted Maxim, That we must re-
nounce either one or the other; either the
Love of the World, or the Love of God
because these two Loves are utterly incon-
sistent. St. John, who was a great Master
in this Science of Love, tells us plainly, *My
little Children, Love not the World, nor the Thing
which are in the World; for if any one Love the
World, the Love of the Father is not in him.*
Understand by this World, which ought not
to be the Object of our Love, that heap of
Vanities which is continually rising up, and
assaulting our Heart to make themselves Ma-
sters of it: Vanities over which the Devil
does certainly Preside, upon which account
he's call'd the *Prince of this World, the God of
this World, who blinds the Understanding.* 'Tis
true, the World is compos'd of Creatures
whereof God is the Author and Creator; but
the World which we now speak of, consisteth
in the bad use, and abuse of these Creatures
of God. Besides, the Workmanship of God

ther

there are One Hundred and a Hundred Objects which are of Mens making, in the Composition of that which is call'd the *World*. God made the Simples, but the Art of Medicine has mingled them and mixt 'em together a Thousand ways, to make of 'em such Remedies as are Purgative, Astringent, &c. God made the Creatures, the Gold, the Silver, the Plants, the Fruits, Human Beauties, and other such-like Things; but if all this were Pure, and such as it came out of the Hands of the Creator, the use of it would be Innocent, nay it wou'd even be Good; for it wou'd serve to bring us back to God, as we make use of a Rivulet, when we go by the side of it, to ascend to its Spring-head.

O ye detestable Corrupters, ye cursed Poysoners, ye have mixt these Simples, and these Minerals which had no Hurt in 'em, and ye have made of 'em deadly Poysons, which carry Death within 'em. O ye Imprudent and Foolish Souls, who Sport and Play with these Monsters, be ye assur'd that they will Devour you. O my Heart, have no dealings with these deceitful Pleasures, with these Enchantments and Delusions, which Transport thee into Places full of Charms, and make thee appear to abound in delicious Drinks and Meats, while in truth thou art in a frightful Desert, and deprived of every thing which is necessary for the Spiritual life, which is the true Life. When the force of these Charms shall cease, O ye wretched Worldlings, ye will find yourselves hanging in the Air, sustain'd by nothing, compass'd with Rocks and Wild Beasts,

The sad consequences of the Love of the World.

one Foot in a black and deep Abyfs, where you will fee a Fire without Light, but burning with an infinite Heat, and which fhall never Ceafe. What unprofitable Remorfe, Complaints, and Reproaches will you then make againft the Devil and the World, who have produc'd in your Senses thefe fatal Delufions ! Happy, and thrice Happy are thofe who fortify themfelves againft thefe great Dangers, by filling their Minds and Hearts with the Ideas of the Sovereign Good ! 'Tis an undoubted Truth in Morality, that this Love of the World ought to be fhun'd and detefted. But alas, how difficult is the Practice of this Maxim ! When the Love of this World has Poffeffion of our Hearts, and enters very far into our Bowels : But the more difficult the Practice is, the more carefull and timely ought we to Labour, to know our Duty, and our Obligation in this Cafe.

A Prayer.

O My God, if thou come not in to my Help to break through the force of the Charm, and diffipate the Delufion which the Devil and the World have caus'd in my Senses and Imagination, I am a loft Soul. I can't but think this Creature happy who I fee advanc'd to a very high Poft, lying upon a Bed of Flowers, enjoying all forts of Pleafures, encompass'd with Adorers, and receiving Pleafures in all his Senses : I endeavour to refift the motions which this Objett excites in me ; I call in to my affiftance the fayings of the Wife, all the light of

Reason

reason, and of thy Word and of my Faith ;
and nevertheless I Succumb: I Love this
Miserable World which hides a Thousand
Poynard's and Serpent's Tongues under
these Flowers. O Lord Jesus, who came to
save me, suffer me not to fall into these
gilded Snares and be lost; pluck away my
Heart from the World, and carry it to Hea-
ven, upon the Wings of a great Eagle; or
drive this unhappy Love out of my Heart,
that I may Love thee, and nothing but thee,
O my heavenly Spouse. To thee who art
the Fountain of Light and Joy, be honour
and glory through all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. IV.

The Fourth Degree of Love.

*How Love to the Creatures may be Inno-
cent, and do no Prejudice to that Entire
Love which we owe only to God.*

SINCE God will be lov'd alone, and pos-
sess our whole Heart, 'tis certain that
we must exclude the Love of the Creatures.
This Love of the Creatures has for its Ob-
ject, either the Criminal Creatures which
are Corrupted with the Poyson of Sin, or
the Innocent Creatures. Those of the first
Rank do not require here a New Chapter,
for 'tis what we have just now call'd the
World,

World, upon which we have cry'd, Vanity of Vanities, and of which we have concluded, that they cannot Rule in our Heart without Banishing from it Divine Love; but there are Creatures with which we have Dealings, that are unavoidable, necessary, and consequently Innocent. Love to this kind of Creatures is not only permitted, but is even Commanded. God has enjoyn'd us to Love our Neighbours; and among these Neighbours, we must shew greater Love to those, who are more nearly related to us. God wou'd have us Love our Husbands and our Wives, as our own Flesh, our Kinsfolk, our Friends, our Superiors, our Inferiors, our Equals; the Rich, the Poor, and in general all the Faithful ought to be lov'd by us. Besides, the Love of God does not exclude all care of Human Affairs; *He that provides not for his Family is worse than an Infidel*, and much more is he so who takes no care of himself. To renounce all Concerns about Carnal and Temporal Things, under pretence of giving our Love wholly to God, is to Tempt God.

Men abuse
the least
Concessions,
which are
made to 'em
about the
Love of the
Creatures.

But such is the nature, and make of Men that they miserably abuse the least Concessions which are made to 'em. 'Tis not forbidden, say we, to love those who are amiable, to enjoy the good things which God has given us. This is enough to serve for a Pretence to the most irregular Passions and excessive Fondness towards them. Wherefore we must be extremely watchful in this Case, because the Passage from that degree of Love to the Creatures which is permitted, to that Degree which is forbidden, is doubtful.

Deceit

Deceitful, Obscure and full of Snares, which Lust spreads in it; and a Thousand, and a Thousand innocent Souls are catch'd in 'em. Let us now see what are the surest Directions we can give in this Case.

The first and most simple Direction is, The first That we must Banish from the Compass of Direction. this permitted Love a Hundred and a Hundred Things, for whose Innocence Men Plead. We must To Eat and Drink sometimes to a little Ex- straiten the cess, to spend Days in playing at Games, in Bounds of vain or malicious Discourse, to Love the Im- that Love pious, because they are a diverting sort of which is People, to seek after their Conversation to permitted. Raily and make ourselves pleasant with them, to busy ourselves in our own Worldly Concerns, without Intermission; to be wholly taken up about our Temporal Necessities; to make Gain our great Affair, and to say I will Gain so much by such a Vessel, and so much by such another; such a Traffick will yield me Cent per Cent, and another will yield me more: These are a part of the things for which Men Plead. But, O unhappy Advocate, you shall know one Day, that the Cause which you now Plead will avail you nothing. Among a Thousand Moments of time which you allow to the World, to your Family, to your Affairs, to your Sports and Earthly Employments, God may sometimes find two or three Moments which he steal from them for him; and then you think that you Love God enough. O how great is the Mercy of God, if he Pardon such Love! Our Love for God, the Acts of this Divine Love, to serve God, to pray to him, to

to hearken to him, ought to be the grand Affair of our Life, and all other Things ought to be subservient to it. Yet we must distinguish what is Innocent from what is not, and not place, as is commonly done, our Criminal Occupations and Pleasures among things Innocent. This is our first Direction.

The second
Direction.
To Love no-
thing but
with Relati-
on to God.

We must
Love the
Creatures so
far as they
are like to
God.

The second Direction about our Love for the Creature is this, That we ought not to Love any thing but with Relation to God Which signifies two Things. The first is That we ought not to Love any Creature but so far as it is like to God, and partake of the Goodness, and Beauty of that Being infinitely perfect. All the Creatures which Sin has not Corrupted, bear either the Image or the Footsteps of the Excellency of God. When a great Lyon has lain upon a Green Meadow, which hath lately been covered with Greenness, he leaves there the Figure of his Members, so that we may immediately and certainly say, he has passed that way. Let the Infidel consider with attention the Heaven and the Earth, the Stars and the Elements, and he will be obliged to say, *My God has pass'd this way*; I see his footsteps every-where. Thou wilt Love these footsteps, O my Soul, and this is that which thou wilt find in the Creature, pure and amiable, for the rest is truly nothing worth. God has made Man after his own Image, and in his own Likeness; and therefore in him we find more of his Footsteps and Signatures. Upon this Account thou hast no Command which obliges thee to Love the Sun and the Moon, but thou art

expressed

expressly commanded to Love Man, who is the Image of God: *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself.* But alas! that which ought to be the Object of our Love in Human Creatures, is sadly defac'd: We must Love in Man only that which is Divine, and I see nothing in Man, but what is Human, Imperfect, Corrupt, Wicked, and Opposite to my God. *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself;* yes, provided this Love does not extinguish the Love of God: But if thou lovest as thyself a wicked Man, who will continue Wicked, thou wilt become wicked like him; for Love always transforms the Person loving into the Object loved. If thy Father, thy Mother, thy Wife, thy Husband, thy Friends, thy Kindred, and Relations are Wicked, do not break the Bands of Blood and Affinity, until thou hast used thy utmost endeavours to render them like to God, that so thou may lawfully love them. If they be obstinately resolv'd to continue wicked, preserve for 'em a tender Compassion, an ardent Charity, which will make thee pray for God their Salvation, and oblige thee to labour for it without Ceasing; but remember, O Christian Soul, that the Love of God is a Jealous Love, which will endure no warmer, and consequently cannot be given to unworthy Objects.

This is the first thing signified in our second Direction, that we ought not to Love any Creature but with Relation to God. The second Truth contain'd in this Direction is, That we must not Love any Creature but for the Love of God, and that we may

The third Direction. We must not Love the Creatures but for the Love of God.

may find thereby such Helps as are capable of encreasing our Love to God. A Being infinitely perfect, our Gracious and Merciful God, is the Centre ; all the Creatures are the Lines which proceed from the Centre and lead us thither. Do not go upon these Lines, beginning from their Centre, by a Motion which will remove thee from the Centre, and carry thee towards the Circumference, i. e. which will withdraw thee from God. But take these Lines by that end which falls upon the Circumference, and follow 'em from thence until they have carried thee back to their Centre, which is also thine, and until thou find thyself immersed in that Abyss of Excellency, Beauty, Goodness and Love, which is called God. In a Word let all the Perfections of the Creatures, serve only as Steps to mount thee up to the Perfections of God.

Of Love Adhering, and Love Circulating.

The Love for the Creatures, is either Love *Adhering* or *Circulating*. If thy Love to the Creatures be *Adhering*, if it be fixed upon a created Object, as its last End, 'tis Mortal : *But if it be circulating, it will save thee ;* for lawful Love circulates, and makes the Tour about all the Creatures, to collect together all that they have of Excellency and Beauty, and bring it back to their Source. Upon which Account, *this circulating Love* is like those great Rivers which run a-cross the Fields and Vallies and make a Tour about part of the Earth, to gather together all the Tributes of the Fountains and Rivulets, and thereby to swell their Waters, and carry 'em all to the

the Sea. Thus our circulating Love does only pass by near the Creatures, and goes to the Ocean of Divine Perfections, to carry the Homages of the whole Universe to it.

But to shun the excess of *Adhering Love*, We can't let us not fall into another Extreme which is also Vicious, tho' not to the same degree with *Adhering Love*. 'Tis true, say some, that we ought not to Love any Creature, because Pure Love is a *Jealous Love*.

We can't Love the Gift which Grace has produced in us.

We must not therefore Love Vertue, say some People, as it is Vertue, because it is Good and Beautiful, and worthy to be Lov'd, but only because it is the Will of God: We must not even Love Divine Love in ourselves, for this is to return to ourselves, and to withdraw from God, who ought to be the only Object of our Love. Whether these Expressions signify nothing, or if they signify something that is very false.

We must Love the Christian Vertues, because they lead us to God, and are the Image of God. This does no injury to the Original, to Love its Copy with a *Joynt-Love*: 'Tis no offence to God to love his Love in ourselves, which alone can unite us to God, and make us seek after him. If we should Love ourselves the Love of God, consider'd as our own Love and our own Work, 'tis true we should become Impious and Idolaters:

when I love in my Heart the Divine Love, I love it with a *Joynt-Love*, which is simply mingl'd with the Divine Love itself. For a Conclusion of this Article about the Love of the Creatures, I say, that there is a way of loving the Creatures, without taking

Our Love for the Creatures ought to be of no Value with us, compar'd with Divine Love.

taking from God our whole Love, and our whole Heart, which he requires of us : *Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart*, that is, that we must not Love the Creatures but in Proportion to the Relation they have to God. What are these Creatures ? *They are but nothing before God ; all the Nations of the Earth are before me as nothing ; I esteem them less than nothing ; I am he who am, or he who is*, as if all other Things had no Being. When God shall add Perfection upon Perfection to my Being, for all Eternity, he will never by this means make me a God, nor a Being infinitely Perfect. Thus the Creature being incapable of approaching so near to God, but there will always be an infinite Space between God and it, 'tis plain, that it is the Nothing of God, as pure nothing is my nothing. This being laid down, it is not difficult to find out the Measure and Proportion, between the Love of God and the Love of ourselves, and the other Creatures ; which is this, that our Being, being only Nothing with respect to God, our Love shou'd be only the nothing of Divine Love, and nothing in comparison of the Love of God. Divine Love must say in our Heart *I am he who is* ; not only I am the sole prevailing Love, but *I am the only Love existing*, in comparison of other Loves, which are but shadows of Love ; as my God is the only Being, in comparison of other Beings, which are only shadows of Beings. O my Soul, divide thus thy Love, and Jealous Love will not be offended at it.

A Prayer.

THOU art very unhappy, O my Soul, to walk continually between Precipices; Death is on the Left-hand; Death is on the Right-hand, and Life is in the Middle; but this is in the end of a narrow way, and in a strait that is very strait. O my God, deliver this poor trembling Soul by the Hand, deliver it from all evil Works, and save it in thy heavenly Kingdom. Suffer me not, under the Pretence of a Lawful Affection, which I owe to the Creatures, whom thou permits or Commands me to Love, to throw myself into the Abyss of a Love without Bounds, and without Reason. Let the vanity and nothingness of the most Perfect Creature be always so plac'd before my eyes, that I may never give it the Love and Preference which is due to thee only. To commit mean and Criminal Actions out of Complaisance and Love to the Creature, is to Love the Creature more than God; 'tis to give to Nothing the Love of Preference, which is due only to the Being infinitely Perfect. O Lord, thou who watches for my Salvation, suffer me not to fall into so great Weakness; but rather support me whilst I walk in the midst of these Precipices, that I may arrive at the desired Harbour, at the Possession of thy Eternal Blessedness; where I shall say without End, To him that created us, and made us Kings and Priests, to his Father, be Honour and Glory, for ever and Ever. Amen.

Part II. N CHAP.

C H A P. V.

The Fifth Degree of Divine Love: To Love God more than ourselves, and to Sacrifice to him all our Properties; From great Sacrifices in the fifth Degree of Love.

WHEN we Concluded the Second Chapter of this Second Part, we told you, that God will have our Love and our Heart, without sharing it with the World, the Creatures, and Ourselves. We have explain'd how, to what Degree, and in what manner we must give to God the Love of Preference, above the World and the Creatures, even those that are most Excellent. But the most difficult and nicest Point is, the Love of Preference which we ought to serve to God, with relation to Ourselves, which is the fifth and last degree of Divine Love. There are in this matter great difficulties relating to the Mind, and yet greater relating to the Heart, whose Interests are so dear to us. Nothing is more famous in the Schools, and in Morality; in the Doctrine, and in the Practice of it, than saying, *the Love of God above all things*: consequently, the Love of God ought to be plac'd above our Self-love. We must love our Neighbour as Ourselves; but we must Love God infinitely more than this Self-love is so precious to us. Here is the difficult

*Amor Dei
super Omnia.*

which mightily entangles us ; this is the last degree of Divine Love. To Love God with the Heart is the first Degree ; to Love him with our Heart is the second Degree ; to Love him so as to exclude wholly the Love of the World, is the third Degree ; to Love him so as to prefer him before all the Creatures, even those that are most Excellent, is the fourth Degree : Lastly, the fifth is, to Love God so as to prefer him to Ourselves, and to all that is in us, and belongs to us. Now we have some things which are External to us, as Glory, Riches, Greatness, &c. These are not the Things we Treat of here, but of that which we mentioned when we Discours'd of the Love of the Creatures. Here we Treat of those Things whereof we have affirm'd *Ourselves* to be compos'd : The *Mysticks* have excellently well call'd them *Properties*. This Term appears to us so convenient in this present Matter, that we cannot abandon it ; These Properties are that which we ought to Sacrifice to Divine Love. There are five Principal ones of them. First, Self-Interest ; 2dly, Self-Love ; 3dly, Our own Judgment ; 4thly, Our own Love ; and 5thly, Our own Excellency. And these are the five Parts into which we divide the fifth Degree of Divine Love. There are five Degrees in it, and in the fifth Degree five great Sacrifices, which constitute the Love of Preference.

The fifth Degree of Divine Love divided into five Sacrifices.

*The First Sacrifice of the Fifth Degree:
We must Sacrifice Self-Interest to Di-
vine Love. Of Love Disinterested.*

Self-Interest is the King, or rather the Tyrant of the World; it is the *Primum Mobile* of all Mens Actions: It Reigns in Courts, in Cities, in Fields, it Reigns even in Deserts; It Reigns in the Church, in Commerce, and everywhere it is the greatest Enemy to the Love of God, and therefore it is the Victim which God loves best; *bring forth these mine Enemies which wou'd not hate me to Reign over them, and slay them here before me.* Kill this Self-Interest, and this Self-Love which oppose the Reigning of my Love. This Self-Interest ought to be regulated, with respect to our Neighbour and with respect to God. With respect to our Neighbour, for that our Love to our Neighbour may be pure, it ought to be disinterested; but this relates to the Commandment, *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself*, and wou'd lead us too far from our present Subject; and therefore we must stop here at that which relates to our God, and say, That it is to him peculiarly we ought to Sacrifice all our Self-Interest.

There are Two Interests. One Eternal and the other Temporal. Eternity ought to be prefer'd to Time; and therefore we shall first speak of the Sacrifice of our Eternal Interest, before we treat of the Sacrifice of our Temporal Interest. This disinterested

Disinterested Love is become famous in these last Years, by a War that has been rais'd in the Schools of Morality: There is therefore no way of writing or speaking at this day of Divine Love, without taking notice of the Disputes about this *Disinterested Love*; we shall therefore say something of this Matter, but without treating of it after the way of the World, with a contentious Spirit, and without accusing any Person.

The very name of *Love Disinterested* has something in it very prepossessing. When we wou'd give an Idea of true Love in the World, we call it by that Name; how much more shou'd we give that Name to the Love which has God for its Object? The Partisans of *Pure Love*, as they are call'd, have specious Reasons which they Object to those who contradict them. Let us hear what they say: God, say they, is infinitely beautiful, and infinitely Great, and consequently he deserves to be infinitely Lov'd; tho' he shou'd not even be good to us, and tho' he shou'd be only Just; tho' there were not in him any Mercy for us. yet we must Love him, even in Hell, if he shou'd throw us into it, with our imperfect Righteousness, without any regard to our Repentance. The hope of Glory and of Reward ought not to be the Spring of our Love: We must Love God without any Degrees; the Soul that is truly transform'd, desires no other thing but to Love; it Loves without any Self-Interest. If God shou'd annihilate Damn it, it wou'd nevertheless Love him; it is always so disposed, as to offer to

An Abridgement of the Reasons for Pure Love.

God the Sacrifice of its Eternal Salvation. A Being infinitely perfectly deserves the most perfect Love, and it can't be denied that a Disinterested Love is more perfect than a Love that is Interested. *If you Love only those which Love you, what thanks have you? It is more glorious to give than to receive. Servile Fear, says St. Bernard, makes Men Slaves; Interested Desires, make Men Mercenary; but pure Love, disinterested Love, makes Men Children.* And does not the Saviour of the World say, *Give without hoping for any thing again?* Ought we not to Love God only for his own Glory? 'Tis not therefore, for our Interest. To Love God for the Reward which we hope to Receive, is to Love ourselves, and therefore to Love God in prospect of a Reward, is to exercise Self-Love and not the Love of God. Suppose, will some say still, that God wou'd damn a Just Man, has not he Authority to do it, and may not he do with his own Goods what he pleases? Is not therefore this Just Man obliged to submit to the Eternal Will of his Sovereign, without ceasing to Love him?

Proofs against this Disinterested Love.

1. This Morality is not that of the Gospel.

It can't be dissembled but these Reasonings have a great Appearance and Pomp but we believe they have not so much solidity as shew; and here follow our Reasons.

1. This specious Morality is neither the Morality of the Law, nor of the Gospel. We find it in none of them, but everywhere the Lawgiver has added Punishments and Rewards to the Precepts he has given us. The Law says, *I set Life and Death before your Eyes; I will shew Mercy to a* The

and Generations in those who Love me. The Gospel speaks no otherwise than the Law: Be thou faithful until Death, and I will give thee the Crown of Life: I will grant thee to eat of the heavenly Manna. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. I know in whom I have believed, and that he is faithful to keep that which I have committed to him against that day: Moses had respect to the Recompence of Reward, as seeing him who is invisible. St. Paul leaving those things which are behind, press'd forward towards the Mark, for the Prize of the High-Calling of God. After he had fought the good fight, he cast his Eyes upon the Crown of Righteousness which is reserved for him. Our Lord declares, That a Glass of Cold Water given in his Name to one of these Little Ones shall not lose its Reward. These are a small Parcel of an infinite number of Texts, which might be alleg'd, to justify our joyning the Love of God with the holy Interest of Eternal Bliss. Wou'd it not be a Prodigy, that Jesus the God of Love, and his Disciples which are the Teachers of Divine Love, shou'd be ignorant of the Nature of pure Love, and permit us, without being Authoriz'd by God, to joyn the Interest of our Eternal Salvation with that of God's Glory? Let none therefore call this Evangelical Love in Contempt, a Mercenary Love; for it is a Love commanded, and the other Love can't be maintain'd either by Precepts or Examples. The Precept of our Lord, Give without hoping for any thing again, speaks only

N 4

of

of that mean Interest which is the chief Spring of the Actions of Worldly Men, who do no Action of Honour and Liberality, until they have found means to indemnify themselves; and oftentimes they find this Compensation in the Vain-Glory which their Self-Love procures them.

The Example of *Moses* and *St. Paul* is not to the Purpose, and proves nothing. *Moses* said to God, *Pardon this People, or else blot me out of thy Book*; and *St. Paul* wish'd to be an *Anathema*, and separated from *Christ* for the Salvation of his Brethren. These are the great motions of Zeal, but they can't be perfect Wills, since they are wishes of things impossible, and even of things wicked. For in fine, none can be Damn'd without hating God, and being depriv'd of his Love. *Moses* and *St. Paul* cou'd not desire to be Damn'd because they cou'd not separate the gnashing of Teeth, Rage, Despair and Hatred of God from Weeping and Sorrow. We must therefore look upon these Transports with Admiration, as being vehement Figures, which represent lively to us the Charity of these great Men for their Brethren, and their Love to God without any Bounds.

The second Reason against Disinterested Love.

Psal. 42.

We judge also that this Morality of Disinterested Love destroys or weakens both the hope of a Christian, and his holy Desires. We admire those Souls who are full of God and nevertheless desire without ceasing the God whom they possess: *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God, my Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God*

God? My Saviour promises to lead me unto the Fountains of Living Waters: *Come to me all ye that are thirsty, and I will give you Drink. If any be a-thirst, let him come to me and drink. I will give you of that Water which shall be in you a Fountain of Water, springing up to Eternal Life. Come to the Waters all ye who are a-thirst, and buy Wine and Milk without Money.* Isa. 55.

It is so far from being true, that these desires are inconsistent with pure Love; that we look upon 'em as one of the principal Characters of Divine Love. And therefore we reserve one large Chapter for them, when we shall treat of these Characters of Sacred Love. How could a thirsty Soul live in this thought, and these violent Desires, if it were not supported by Hope? Let us never therefore admit any Idea of pure Love, which is prejudicial to this Hope and these Desires.

The desire of Happiness is so natural to the Soul, that without a Figure it may be said to be of its Essence. This desire is an Impulse of the Human Will, which inclines towards its true Object; 'tis a Motion which arises from a Sense of its own Weakness. The Soul is very sensible that it has lost that which can render it happy; it is always searching until it has found it: And in searching after it the Heart falls into great Mistakes, and embraces a Thousand different a Thousand Objects, which make it miserable in stead of making it Happy, this is not and ought not to be any prejudice against the Lawful Desires of true Happiness. The abuse of good Things ought not to render the good use of them: Because the Under-

The third Reason against Disinterested Love,

The fourth Reason against Disinterested Love: A distinction between good felt, and good known.

Not to Love God is not so much the Crime, as the Punishment of the Devil.

Understanding and the Will are disorder'd by Errors and Crimes, must we suffer these noble Faculties to lie altogether Idle?

'Tis a mistake of the Springs by which the Soul moves, to suppose that the care and knowledge of the Excellency, the Beauty and the Goodness of God are capable of inspiring us with this Love. There is a good *felt*, and a good *known*. The Sovereign Good being *known*, may excite Admiration, but the Sovereign Good being *felt*, is the sole Source and true Cause of Love. Upon which Account we have formerly asserted, that to the end we may Love God, we must know him by *Sensation* and by *Taste*. The Devils know God perfectly as the Sovereign Good, but they Love him not, which proceeds from hence, because they feel not God as Good, and therefore they cannot Love him. They feel God as Just, and as a Revenger, and therefore they shun and fear him. And they cannot be otherwise.

This Reflection leads us to another, which is this, That at present the Crime of the Devils and the Damn'd does not consist, in their not-Loving God; for this is their Punishment rather than their Crime. 'Tis true that the hatred of God is an abominable *Sensation*, which can never cease to be Criminal. But in the Damned this is not a new Crime, but a Crime continued, whose Impurity lies in its Source. These miserable Spirits are taught to hate God, at the time when God made them sensible of his Goodness, and that he was good to them; and thereby they considered themselves worthy of an Eternal Punishment.

ishment. They continue in this Crime, and this Crime is mingled with their Punishment, and makes a part of it. If God had never made them good, they wou'd not have been oblig'd to Love him: But not that we ought to Love him, only upon the account of his bounty and Goodness to us; but his Beauty and his Goodness are two joynt-Springs of our Love, which are absolutely inseparable. And therefore it is a meer Chimera to talk of a Divine Love, without Desire, without Esteem, and without Hope. In the beginning of this Treatise we affirm'd and prov'd, That the Essence of Divine Love, is the Desire of Union: And from hence 'tis plain, that we can't Love God, unless we desire to be united to him. 'Tis this which makes this Union, and the Sovereign Happiness which results from it, to be our great Interest, and therefore no Divine Love can be Disinterested; not even in the other Life, and much less in the present Life.

The faithful and Devout Soul contemplating God, considers him in two Respects: It finds in him the *Sovereign Good*; it finds in him *its own Sovereign Good*. We must, therefore, Love God only, under the notion of the *Sovereign Good*, and not in the second respect as our own *Sovereign Good*. What a confus'd Imagination is here? as if the *Sovereign Good*, and my *Sovereign Good* were not one and the same Idea; an Object most simple, and absolutely indivisible! If the Deists do separate and cut in two this most simple Idea, admiring God as the *Sovereign Good*, and hating him as the *Sovereign Evil*, this is their Crime and their Misery. In

The fifth
Reason a-
gainst Disin-
terested
Love.

In fine, we cannot relish this Disinterested Love, because it supposes such Things create in us a Horror, and against which our Reason, the Will, the Mind, the Heart and all the Passions oppose themselves, which is this; That if God will Damn us, although we have done all that he requires of those whom he will Save, we must submit to it and say, O my God, I Love thee without any Interest of mine, Damn me if thou wilt, I consent to it. This is a false Humility which makes the true Saints rage and fret to the bottom of their Soul. But, say some, if God will damn a just Man, ought not he to submit to him? I answer first, that this is an impossible Supposition. 'Tis true, that in the use of that Right which Divines call *Absolute Right*, God may make an Innocent Creature suffer, and therefore without any Injustice he cou'd make his own Well-Beloved Son, to endure cruel Torments.

'Tis said, that God translated upon the Son the Iniquities of all Mankind; but even this was an act of his Absolute Power which hath no Bounds; And by the same Absolute Power in Predestination of two Men equally Guilty, he chooses one to Save him, and leaves the other abandon'd to his Corruption and Misery. But this *Absolute Right* is not that by which God at present governs the World.

There is a *Right temper'd* by the Laws of Justice and Mercy. And according to this Right, of which we can only take Conjecture, it is not possible that a just Man should Perish. 'Tis therefore great Imprudence

throw devout and simple Souls into great Tortures and Vexations, by these impossible Suppositions.

But altho' these Suppositions were neither absurd, nor impossible, we say, that a Righteous Soul would never be oblig'd to subscribe to the Decree of its own Eternal Damnation. It ought to embrace the Knees of its Judge, and say unto him, I desire eternally to Love thee, O my God, and consequently will never consent to descend into this dark place, where to hate, and to fear thee, is the prevailing and unavoidable Sensation. I confess I am but nothing before thee, I confess that I owe all unto thee; and therefore I am resolv'd to Sacrifice all to thee, except Thyself and my Love for thee: I will perish, I will cease to be, rather than cease to love thee, my adorable Benefactor. There remains, I think, but one thing for me to do, to kiss this great and important Head; and that is to dissipate the strong Delusion which arises from the specious Objection we have propos'd.

We must Love God only, say they, we must Love him alone, Love him for the Interest of his own Glory, and not for ours; he hath made all things for himself, and for his own Glory. I answer, that there is a *supreme Interest*, and an *Interest subordinate*. We ought to Love God for the Interest of his Glory; this is the *supreme Interest*; but it does not forbid me to Love him for my Interest, i. e. for my eternal Salvation; this is the *Interest subordinate*. Provided I keep always between my Divine Love, which is

An answer to the grand Objection of the Partisans of pure Love. There is double Interest; a supreme Interest, and a subordinate Interest.

is produc'd by the Interest of God's Glory and the same Love produc'd by my own Interest, the infinite distance which is between the Being infinitely perfect and me, I cannot displease my God. To this purpose we may remember the Reflections which we formerly made, when we treated of the Love we may have for the Creatures of God which are Pure and Innocent. O my Soul, if thou still loves God principally, upon the account of thyself, and for the good which he can do thee, thou art still Mercenary, and hast not arriv'd at pure Love : But if thou lovest God, chiefly upon the account of himself, and by Reflection, upon the account of thyself, thy Love does not deserve this name of *Mercenary*, which is a name of Contempt.

Let us not say, that to Love God for the Interest of our own Salvation, is to Love our own Glory, and not that of God ; for this is an act of Self-Love, and not of Divine Love ; for on the contrary, I maintain, that I Love the Glory of God, in loving my own Happiness, and in seeking it no-where but in God. 'Tis infinitely glorious to God that he is the Sovereign Happiness of Intelligent Creatures : That 'tis he who fills the vast Capacity of Man's Heart, and the Arrogancy of his Desires, which have no Bounds, with the proof that he is the infinite Good, who makes infinitely for his Glory and Honour. I Love therefore my God, and I seek his Glory, in seeking after my Eternal Salvation and Paradise.

Our Salvation
is the Sovereign
Glory of God,
i. e. the Manifestation of
his Glory.

'Tis an undoubted Truth, that God has built this Paradise for his own Glory; but 'tis also true, that he built it for the Glory of his Elect: We may therefore seek after, and desire Paradise, both for the Glory of God, and for our own Glory. And this is to follow the Intention, and imitate the Sentiment of the Creator of this Paradise.

In fine we say, that 'tis a false subtilty to distinguish here God from our own Interest. Our Eternal Interest is When we love our own Interest, *i. e.* our not distinguish'd from our Eternal Happiness, 'tis properly God whom God himself. we Love; for he alone is our Happiness and our Sovereign Good.

A Prayer.

O My God, if I Love thee, for any other Interest but Thyself, I consent that thou shouldst destroy my Heart, and the Mercenary Love which is plac'd in it: But rather spare my Heart, and destroy all Mercenary Love. I enter'd upon this Meditation with trembling, and I leave it with great Commotion. I am afraid that I am not sufficiently jealous of the Glory of my God, when I laid down this Maxim in my Heart, that 'tis lawful to Love God for my own Interest. O Lord my Saviour and my God, if I am receiv'd, Pardon me this Error, and Correct me. For I desire, O Divine Spouse of my Soul, I desire to Love thee, after the most perfect manner, and with the purest Love: that I can't believe that my Love is Mercenary and Interested, since I neither have, nor desire to have any other Interest but Thyself, and

and the Eternal Possession of thee. This is that to which I aspire ; this is that which I beg of thee, with all the Powers of my Soul. To thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory thro' all Ages, *Amen.*

C H A P. VI.

Of the Sacrifice of our Temporal Interests

Modus a-
mandi Deum
est sine
Modo.

IN the preceding Chapter we have walk'd upon Thorns, being always afraid of robbing God of something that belongs to him. Here the way is more Smooth ; for without any difficulty we must Sacrifice to Divine Love, all our Temporal Interests, how dear and precious soever they may be. In the preceding Article, while we oppose this Disinterested Love, it seem'd that we had mind to set Bounds to the Love of God, which neither has nor ought to have any ; if we had a design to oppose that Maxim well known, and so often repeated, *That the measure of the Love of God, is to Love him without measure.* You know, O my God, we had any design to diminish the Love which is due to you ; we wou'd have all intelligent Natures Love God infinitely, and above all Things : We wish that he wou'd draw aside the Veil from before his infinite Beauties and Excellencies, that we may acknowledg him to be as worthy of this Love as he is deserving of it.

Effect: We wish that his Grace were so
lively and ardent, both in us and in all Men,
to make them all burn and consume them-
selves with the fire of his Love; but know-
ing the infinite Goodness wherewith God
condescends to our Weakness, we can't but
believe that his Justice is satisfied with the
idea we have given of Pure Love.

Nevertheless, when from Speculation we
descend to Practice, we must confess that we
have as little cause to be satisfied, with our
behaviour and our Heart as with our Defini-
tions. We can't deny when we examine
both ourselves and our Neighbours, that Self-
love, that familiar Devil, is concern'd in our
duty, and mingled with it; our desires are
too much Interested; our fears have too
much of the Slave in them. How can our
motions with reference to God be otherwise
than too much Interested, with respect to
the good things of Eternity, since we make
our Worship subservient to our World-
and Temporal Interests. If God serves
according to our own Pleasure, then we
love God with a good Heart: But as soon as
he forsakes us a little, and deprives us of our
prosperity, we Murmur. And if we shou'd
know these first Motions of Revolt, we
shou'd imitate the fury of that Pagan Prince, Licinius.

He chang'd his Gods, because they did not
give him Victory over *Constantine*.
Tis here, and with respect to these Tem-
poral Goods, Riches, Fortune, Greatness,
Pleasure, Repose, Health, Ease and
Prosperity, that we must Love God with a
perfect Disinterestedness. We must say to
God, *part II.*

Pure Love
does not re-
quire a per-
fect Indiffe-
rence, even
as to Tem-
poral Things.

and the Eternal Possession of thee. This is that to which I aspire ; this is that which I beg of thee, with all the Powers of my Soul. To thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory thro' all Ages, *Amen*

C H A P. VI.

Of the Sacrifice of our Temporal Interests

Modus a-
mandi Deum
est sine
Modo.

IN the preceding Chapter we have walk'd upon Thorns, being always afraid of robbing God of something that belongs to him. Here the way is more Smooth ; for without any difficulty we must Sacrifice to Divine Love, all our Temporal Interests, how dear and precious soever they may be. In the preceding Article, while we oppose this Disinterested Love, it seem'd that we had mind to set Bounds to the Love of God, which neither has nor ought to have any ; if we had a design to oppose that Maxim well known, and so often repeated, *That the measure of the Love of God, is to Love him without measure.* You know, O my God, we had any design to diminish the Love which is due to you ; we wou'd have all intelligent Natures Love God infinitely, and above all Things : We wish that he wou'd draw off the Veil from before his infinite Beauties and Excellencies, that we may acknowledg him to be as worthy of this Love as he is

effe

Effect: We wish that his Grace were so
lively and ardent, both in us and in all Men,
to make them all burn and consume them-
selves with the fire of his Love; but know-
ing the infinite Goodness wherewith God
condescends to our Weakness, we can't but
believe that his Justice is satisfied with the
idea we have given of Pure Love.

Nevertheless, when from Speculation we
descend to Practice, we must confess that we
are as little cause to be satisfied, with our
behaviour and our Heart as with our Defini-
tions. We can't deny when we examine
both ourselves and our Neighbours, that Self-
love, that familiar Devil, is concern'd in our
affection, and mingled with it; our desires are
too much Interested; our fears have too
much of the Slave in them. How can our
affections with reference to God be otherwise
than too much Interested, with respect to
the good things of Eternity, since we make
our Worship subservient to our World-
and Temporal Interests. If God serves
according to our own Pleasure, then we
love God with a good Heart: But as soon as
he forsakes us a little, and deprives us of our
prosperity, we Murmur. And if we shou'd
know these first Motions of Revolt, we
shou'd imitate the fury of that Pagan Prince, Licinius.
who chang'd his Gods, because they did not
give him Victory over Constantine.

It is here, and with respect to these Tem-
poral Goods, Riches, Fortune, Greatness,
Pleasure, Repose, Health, Ease and
Prosperity, that we must Love God with a
perfect Disinterestedness. We must say to
God, *art II.*

In Practice
our Love to
God is too
much Inter-
ested.

Licinius.

Pure Love
does not re-
quire a per-
fect Indiffe-
rence, even
as to Tem-
poral Things.

God, O my God, Thou art Lord of your Goods, give them to me, or give them not; make me to live in a mean Condition, in Want, in Pain, in Prison, in Tortures; leave me Life, send me Death, I will not Love you less. This is the Disinterestedness which made the Martyrs; the Saints Sacrific'd all to God except God himself.

'Tis not necessary to be indifferent as to good and Evil.

But must we then for doing all the Duties of a Christian, be entirely indifferent for Prosperity and Adversity, for Poverty and Riches, for Health and Sickness? We can't carry our Obligations too high; yet as much as is possible, we must remove from Christian Morality those frightful External Practices, which may estrange the Inquirer from Obedience to the Faith, yet without allowing in any manner the abominable loose Maxims of our Modern Casuists. It does not appear that the Gospel designs to make us look upon Temporal Good and Evil with one and the same Eye. We have sufficient means whereby to determine ourself about this Matter; but I will only make use of what *St. Paul* says of Liberty; *Cal thou be free, use it rather*: Liberty is of the same Nature with all the other Goods of the present Life; and if we are not oblig'd to be indifferent as to Liberty and Slavery, we don't see that we can be so as to the other Goods whereof God has given us the Possession.

Rules to be observed for maintaining pure Love in good Order, with respect to Temporal Good.

But there are here some Rules to be served, which will reduce our Duties to just Severity wherein they ought to be: The first of these Rules is, that we ought to

the good Pleasure of God more than all Things. I suffer, God will have it so, and he never Wills any Thing but with a profound Wisdom. I will therefore Love both his Will and his Wisdom, more than my own Ease and Pleasure.

The second Rule is, That we ought to prefer the Glory of God to all our Interests. I suffer, but 'tis for the Glory of my Saviour and my God, who has suffer'd so much for me; his Name is glorified, my Neighbours are edified by my Sufferings, and therefore they are no more indifferent. The Devout soul being determin'd by the Will of his God, says with the Apostle, *I rejoyce now in sufferings for Christ*; I am pleas'd in Stripes, Reproaches, in Prisons, &c. The Apostles being call'd before the Council and Scourg'd, joyc'd that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ.

Lastly, The third Rule is, That when our eternal Salvation is concern'd, we ought no longer to be indifferent as to Good and Evil, as to Prosperity and Adversity; we willingly run to Death, and undergo all Pains which God inflicts upon us, when we consider that he chastises us, because he loves us, and desires to save us.

Satan, who sought the Destruction of Job, who persecuted him, wou'd persuade that the Love of this holy Man was an interested Love. *Hast thou seen, said God to Job a great Example of Disinterested Love.* *such a Man as my servant Job, that there be like him in the Earth, a perfect and up- Man, one that feareth good and escheweth evil.* Then Satan answered the Lord, and said,

does Job fear God for nought? hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his House, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the Land: Is the Love of Job disinterested? Hast thou not paid him well by giving him such abundance of Riches? But put forth thy hand and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. God to confound Satan, and justify his Servant Job, deprived him in the twinkling of an Eye of all his Riches, and even of his dear Children which were a part of his own Bowels. And because the pure and disinterested Love of Job maintain'd this first shock, the Devil knew his attack. *My servant Job holds fast Integrity*, said the Lord to Satan, *altho' thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without Cause.* Whereupon the Tempter answered him; *Skin for skin, and all that a Man hath will he give for his Life; but put forth thy hand now, and touch his Bone and his Flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.* Satan did not then know the last refining of this Disinterested Love; or he wou'd never have failed to say unto God, *Smite Job not only in his body but in his soul; Pronounce upon him the sentence of Eternal Death, and thou wilt see that he will curse thee to thy face.* It appears to me no doubted, that these great Calamities which Providence made our holy Man to endure are the Rules and Bounds of Divine Love without Interest.

The Sacrifices which compleat our Duty.

O faithful Soul, thou hast Sacrificed enough of great Importance and Rigour to thy God, without that of thy Earthly

nal Salvation. Sacrifice thy Passions, Sacrifice thy Self-Love; Sacrifice thy desires of Revenge; Sacrifice to him the Ingratitudes of thy Friends, and the Outrages thou suffers from thine Enemies. Sacrifice all the Motions of Impatience which seize thee, when thou art under the Rod of the Almighty; Sacrifice all the Motions of Ambition which encline thee to aspire after Greatness, all thy covetous desires, which say to thee perpetually, *give, give, and never say it is enough.* In fine, remember that great Sacrifice which the Apostle St. Paul demands of thee, and enjoyns thee: *I beseech you therefore, Brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service,* Rom. 12. 1. This Sacrifice ought to be a *living Sacrifice*; it is not therefore a delivering of one up to Eternal Torments, for in Hell there is nothing living; this Country is all peopl'd with the Dead, and these are such Victims as the living God would abhor. Sacrifice your Bodies as a *living Sacrifice*: Are you call'd to Martyrdom? lay aside your Interest, and offer to God the Sacrifice of the greatest Interest which you have in the Flesh, which is your Life. St. Paul requires no more of you.

O my Soul, I don't therefore require of thee that thou renounce either the Hope, or the Desires of the Eternal Glory of Paradise: This is the disposition of the Heart of those desperate Persons, whom God treats according to their Despair. On the contrary, hold fast thy Hope unto the end, and it will

1 Epist. St.
Peter.

be an anchor sure and stedfast, which entring within the Veil, will confirm thee against the most cruel Agitations, and the most violent Temptations.

We ought
not to Sacri-
fice Divine
Consolations.

God does not even require, that thou should'st Sacrifice to him those sweet sensible Consolations thou enjoyest, those Waters Springing up unto Eternal Life, those precious Foretastes which make thee ardently desire the full Enjoyment; all the supports which sustain thee in the Expectation of the Crown. Say not to God, Take from me your comforting Grace, deprive me of the Presence, and Operations of that Spirit of Liberty which comforts me in the Pilgrimage; leave me in sadness and under the Privation of all sensible Pleasure; take from me the view of Paradise; lay open before me all the infernal Torments, and make my Soul pass through all the anguish of Death and Hell. It matters not, I will Love thee nevertheless provided thou reserve to me, for the future, the Consolations of the Glory of Paradise. O my Soul, the Possession of God is too precious to renounce it even for a Moment; rather, let *my Soul be always satisfied as with Marrow and Fatness.* Let the Sun of Righteousness shed upon me his gentle and saving Rays, and let it never be eclips'd. For the Fountain of Life is in thee, and in thy Light we shall see Light. Let me drink of the River of thy Pleasures, for I am a-thirst for the Living God, as the Hart thirsteth for the Water-Brooks.

Pfalm 36.

'Tis true, That we have condemn'd to Divine Con-
 Banishment all our Temporal Interest: 'Tis ^{solations are}
 also true, that Divine Vertues and Consola- ^{eternal Blef-}
 tions are in some sort Temporal, because ^{ings.}
 they will not last always, since Faith and
 Hope shall be chang'd into Sight and Fruition.
 The Foretastes and Consolations will also
 have an end, when they shall be mingled
 with that infinite Ocean of Pleasures which
 God prepares for his Saints. But reckon
 not, O my Soul, any thing to be Temporal
 which is design'd to conduct thee unto a hap-
 py Eternity. All Blessings are Eternal,
 which are to mingle with Eternal Glory;
 these therefore are not fit matter for a Sa-
 crifice: You must not therefore abandon, or
 be indifferent for the Consolations of Grace,
 no more than for the satisfaction of Glory.
 Sadness of Heart will come perhaps often
 enough without being invited; thy Soul will
 be like the thirsty Earth, which has no Wa-
 ter, thy Heart will aspire after Divine Con-
 solations, and they will not come. Thou
 wilt have Reason to say, the Comforter who
 revives my Heart is gone away: Come, O
 thou Spirit, *the Comforter, who art sent by the*
Father and the Son, come, O Lord Jesus, come
quickly. And this Spirit the Comforter may
 very well make thee enquire after him, and
 wait a long time for him, because thou hast
 often made thy God to wait, who called thee
 to Conversion and Repentance. 'Tis true,
 that in this Condition, thou must Sacrifice to
 God thy anguish and vexation; but this
 ought to be done with a Spirit of Resigna-
 tion and Submission to the hardest Appoint-
 ments

ments of Divine Providence, and never with a Spirit of Indifference ; as if we shou'd say to God, Return if thou wilt, for if thou return not to me, I will keep where I am, and not go to thee.

A Prayer.

O Lord my God, I am thy Slave by Nature, for I am born thy Subject: I am a Slave to thy Justice by my Sins, which have rendred me liable to all the Punishment of thy Vengeance: But I desire to become thy Child by Grace. Suffer not therefore, O my God, my Love to thee to be the Love of a Slave, whose only Band is the fear of Punishment, or the desire of Temporal Rewards. I would Love thee, O my God, in all the hard States, which thy Will may subject me to. I desire to Love thee in Prisons, in Irons, in Banishment, upon the Wheel, and upon the Scaffold, that I may Love thee upon the Throne, and under the Crown which thou preparest for me. To thee, O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be all Love, Honour and Glory thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. VII.

Continuation of the fifth Degree of Divine Love. The Second Sacrifice is that of our Self-Love.

THE Love of Man must be something All the World precious, since every one wou'd have would have God demands it as his Prerogative; *My our Love.* give me thy Heart, refuse me not thy love. The World does all that it can to take away our Love from us; every particular Person aspires after it, and even those who fear us, and do not love us, yet would have our Love. But our flesh being Worldly and Prudent, gives not this Love to any Person, but keeps it entirely to itself. If it loves any thing 'tis with respect to itself, Self-Love swallows up all the other Loves, the Rod of *Moses* swallow'd up all the Rods of all the Magicians of *Egypt*. 'Tis Self-Love which Divine Love chiefly requires us to Sacrifice; for we ought to Love more than ourselves.

This therefore is the second of these five sacrifices which are included in the last Degree of Divine Love; and to understand a little how this Sacrifice is to be made, we must know what Self-Love is, and what are its Effects.

We may say without straining, That there Self-love is a no Controversy in Moral Subjects, nor *Proteus*, which assumes 1000 Sentiments in the Soul which are more difficult Shapes.

difficult to be fully understood than Self Love. It is a *Proteus* which changes into Thousand Shapes, which is sometimes Saint, and sometimes a wicked Wretch sometimes a Lyon, and sometimes a Lamb and always a Fox. In general, Love is an infinite adherence to the Object Loved. Self-Love has for its Object, *myself*, and this Self-Love may be defined an infinite adherence to *myself*. 'Tis an effusion of the Heart which pours itself out wholly upon self, which places itself upon the Throne of the Sovereign Good, and makes itself the Centre of the Universe, designing that all should move about it, and turn towards its Interest, as if all were made for it.

Self-Love is different from the Love of ourselves.

One thing which makes it difficult to understand Self-Love, is the ambiguity of the Word. Some Men imagine that Self-Love and the Love of ourselves are the same thing. The Love of ourselves is not only permitted but commanded; for in fine, our Lawgiver has told us, *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thy self*. The Love of ourselves therefore is the Original, by which we are to form the Love of our Neighbour. Now the Original ought at least to be as perfect and as necessary as the Copy. The Love of ourselves being pure and lawful, is not different from Divine Love, but is a Branch of it.

To Love ourselves is to Love our Sovereign Good; to desire to be infinitely Happy; to have an infinite adherence to that which makes our Happiness; now God is that which makes our Happiness; and therefore God is our Sovereign Good; and therefore

desire, to will it, is to Love God Sovereignly. To confound this Vertue with the Vice of Self-Love, is to fall into one of the most dangerous Delusions that the Mind can fall into. The true Love of ourselves desires not to share with God, it knows itself to be a true Nothing. Self-Love would procure to itself Divine Honour, it is a God, or rather an Idol to itself, in its little Sanctuary. The true Love of ourselves is always ready to Sacrifice all our Interests to the Glory of God, for in so doing it finds much gain to itself. On the contrary, Self-Love is always disposed to Sacrifice the Glory of God to its own Interests, for it sees nothing to be gain'd unless it carry all with it. Charity, the true Love, is not puff'd up, but Self-Love is puff'd up and bursts. The true Love of ourselves seeks after the good things that are Eternal; but Self-Love seeks only Temporal Goods. Self-Love is the Love of the body, of its Pleasures, of its Ease, and of its Glory; and the true Divine Love is the Love of the Soul, which seeks after its true riches and Honours.

I have said that Self-Love is a *Proteus*, The varieties of Self-Love, which changeth into a Thousand Shapes. In one place it is Cruel, it devours like a Lion; this is when it meets with Resistance to its design of procuring all Homage to itself. In another place 'tis like a Lamb, a subtle Animal which creeps to gain its ends. Sometimes it is insatiable, at other times it keeps a fast, and looks with a meagre lean Countenance. 'Tis often voluptuous, and immerses itself in Pleasures; and often

often also the Love of Glory draws it from its repose, and leads it into the midst of Fire and Flame. It loves Life above all things; and yet it dares affront Death upon occasion: It is in a Thousand Places where you would not look for it, and this is the Cause why we seek for it in those Places where it is not. The Libertines who know that this Self-Love is often a Hypocrite that is hid under a Frock, and reigns under a Hair-shirt, will have it also to be found in the true Saints; but Wisdom will be justified of her Children.

'Tis wonderful, will some say, That the Morality of the Moderns treats so much of Self-Love, and attributes so many things to it, while the holy Scripture says so little of it. Nevertheless from thence we may draw the true Idea of Self-Love, as we do of all other Vices. But we must know that what we call Self-Love is the same which the Latins call *Lust*, and which the Scripture particularly St. Paul, calls Concupiscence. This is that Carnal Man whereof the Apostle has given so lively a Description in the Seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and in the Fifth Chapter to the Galatians. This is the Law of the Members, this is the Spirit that Reigns in the Carnal Man. Nothing can be said of Self-Love which does not agree to that which the Church calls *Lust*. This is enough to make us understand what are the Effects of Self-Love, which are Pride, Envy, a furious Revenge, Impatience under Injuries, and insatiable Covetousness, an Ambition which

has no Bounds: These are the Pleasures of the Flesh, without excepting Vain-Glory, and all the other Pleasures of the Mind, which Pleasures are nevertheless the Pleasures of the Flesh, because they proceed from Carnal Lust: For Lust seeketh after all these Vanities, and so does Self-Love also. But without aggravating the Matter, the Picture of this Love may be abridg'd, by saying, that it is the Source of all Crimes, and consequently of all Punishments. And so there's no Evil, nor Calamity, nor Disorder in the World, and in the Church, which may not be justly imputed to this Love of Lust: This is the Process against, as well as the Description of Self-Love: Let us now make its Apology, and as it were its *Elogium*. We confess that it is the Father of all Human Vertue, of the Valour of *Alexander*, of the Temperance of *Polemon*, of the Justice of *Aristides*, of the Severity of the *Caro's*; in a Word, of all the Pagan Vertues. Nay, the greatest part of Christian Vertues proceed from no other Principle than this Self-Love; nay, perhaps there is not any of them in which there is not some degrees of this disorderly Principle. Charity does nothing which Self-Love and Lust do not very often. To Give, to Pardon, to do good to our Enemies, to Mortify ourselves, to be troubled for having offended God, are Works of Charity, but which are imitated by Lust. And from thence come these infinite Delusions, whereby Men deceive themselves. Self-Love therefore is the Source of all Vices, and all false Vertues.

But

The World
can't part
with Self-
Love.

But that which ought to surprize all considering Men, is this, That Self-Love is no thing worth; its Effects are bad, and nevertheless we can't part with it. *Destroy in me Self-Love*, said one, *and I will destroy Hell*. He had Reason to say so; but give us leave to say, destroy Self-Love, and you will destroy the World, and subvert all Society: You may see here and there a Christian Vertue as you may see some Trees which have escap'd the Axe in a Forest cut down. These rare Vertues which will make no Society, will not be sufficient to preserve the World. Arts and Sciences will Perish; the Helm of State will be abandon'd; the Violent will carry all things by Force from the Just, and so Societies will be destroy'd: For Self-Love is the Cause of all these Motions, and will produce them until the Reign of Charity comes, a Reign which will not come until another Age, and perhaps not till we ascend into Heaven; the World therefore is not maintain'd by Vertue alone. There are always two Principles of our Actions, *Honour and Conscience*. When Conscience acts alone, its Actions are commonly faint; Passion must enliven them, and this Passion is *Honour*. And this Honour is nothing else but Self-Love, and Lust refined. Honour is not a criminal Principle, provided it be not the prevailing Principle; that it follow after Charity, and do not precede it; that it be its Slave, and not its Master. This Reflection that the World cannot part with Self-Love and Lust, makes me say, O World, how unhappy and vain art thou since thou can't part with Vanity, until the Reign

Reign of Charity be come ! At present we see that we owe the Sacrifice of this Love to the Love of God.

A Prayer.

O My God, thy design is that I should examine and know myself: But to whatever side I turn me, in visiting my inward parts, I meet every-where with this thick veil of my Self-Love which robs me of myself. O thou inexhaustible Source of Delusions, the Author of Metamorphoses, which changes all my faults into Vertues, which my Weakness makes my Strength, which Multiplies the Greatness of my pretended Vertues, and destroys all my Vices in my own Eye. O my God, rend this Veil, that I may see plainly all the Evil that is in me, that I may leave it, detest and abandon it.

C H A P. VIII.

Continuation of the preceding Chapter of the Sacrifice of Self-Love, and what this Sacrifice is.

IN the first Place, To Sacrifice, is to Banish, Kill, and Destroy: But is it possible to destroy entirely Self-Love? we have already concluded that it is not; and that even this

this would not be useful in a World made as this is at present. This perfect destruction of Self-Love belongs to another Age. At present the Sacrifice of this Love will consist in its Mortification. We must treat it as we treat the other Passions ; we must pluck out its Teeth, and cut off its Nails ; we must Moderate, or to speak more properly, we must extinguish its Transports. 'Tis a bad Master, but it may make a good Servant.

2. In every Sacrifice there is a Priest, and who is the Priest here ? St. Paul said, *That Jesus Christ offer'd himself to his Father, his Eternal Spirit* : Jesus Christ being God crucified Jesus Christ the Man ; this is our great Priest, viz. the Eternal Spirit, who alone can make of our Self-Love a Sacrifice *holy and acceptable to God*. And therefore no Pagan nor Infidel, nor Impious, nor Worldly Man, can Sacrifice Self-Love. Thou canst not Sacrifice one Passion by another ; one Vice by another Vice. A Covetous Man is incapable of Sacrificing his Covetousness to Greatness, a Voluptuous Man can Sacrifice his Pleasure to Vain-Glory ; but this is not to Cure, but to Change the Disease : It is the Eternal Spirit ; it is the Grace of Election, which alone can offer this great and important Sacrifice.

The second Priest in the present Sacrifice.

3. To this great Priest, who is the first, we must joyn a second. We may very well say, That this second Priest is Divine Love : But we will go immediately to find another Office for it in the Sanctuary ; present we will say, that this second Priest

of Self-Love, is the Heart itself: A hard Sacrifice for Mortal Man; and so the Heart is at the same time the Sacrificer, and the thing Sacrificed. This is a hard Sacrifice which our Lord expresses in these emphatical Terms; *Pluck out thy Eyes, cut off thy hands, and cast them from thee.* And therefore St. Paul directs us to no other Person, to offer thee Sacrifice of ourselves; he does not say, *I exhort you, Brethren, that ye cause your Bodies to be presented a Living Sacrifice; that ye yourselves present your Bodies a Living Sacrifice,* Rom. 12.

4. In every Sacrifice there is an Altar; What is the Altar on which the Sacrifice is offer'd. and what can be the Altar upon which we should Sacrifice our Self-Love, but the Cross of Jesus Christ, and the Merit of his Death? This is that Altar of which the Apostle says, *We have an Altar of which they have no part to partake, who serve in the Tabernacle.* The Death and Merits of our Lord sanctify our Gifts: But, O wonderful difference! the Altar Sanctifies the Gifts, because the Gifts are laid out and spread upon the Altar; here the Altar Sanctifies our Gifts, because it is thrown upon these Gifts. For it is the Merit of the Death of Jesus Christ, which is pour'd out upon the Sacrifice of our Love, and renders it acceptable to God; this is the smoke of the Incense which ascends to our Nostrils, and makes him Smell an Odour of Atonement.

5. In every Sacrifice there must necessarily be fire and Salt; every Oblation is salted with Fire. This is the Office of Divine Love, which is the Salt that seasons and gives

gives a relish to our Offerings; for without this they would be insipid, and God wou'd say unto us, *I abhor your Offerings, and I take no Pleasure in them.* This is the Sacred Fire which consumes our Self-Love: This burning-Love swallows up and consumes all other Loves, the Love of Riches, the Love of Pleasures, the Love of Ease, the Love of Preferments, the Love of Repose, and even the Love of Life itself. For the true Believer Sacrifices for the Love of God, his Life in Martyrdom, his Country in Banishment, his Liberty in Prisons, his Ease in most cruel Tortures, his Honour in the shameful Punishments he suffers, his Repose in horrible Dungeons, and in the Labours of a Gallies-Slave, whose horror cannot be well represented. All this wou'd appear a meer Bubble and Dream, if God in his great Mercy in spite of the Corruption of the Age, and the abatement of Zeal, had not reserv'd a small number of Elect Souls, who plainly show that Love is stronger than Death, than our Love for Life, and than all Self-Love. We have nam'd some of them, but besides those which have been nam'd, must not forget Mr. *Laubouiniere*, and *Marolles*, Illustrious Martyrs, who died in Torments and in Dungeons, after they had been a long while Gallies-Slaves; and the *le Fevre* deferres, who are still alive to this day, and afford a singular Edification to the Companions in their Sufferings.

The God to whom we Sacrifice is the true God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

6. In fine, in every Sacrifice a God is made use of; we chuse a Deity to which we offer our Sacrifice. The God who is ador'd in

Tm

Temple, O my Soul, is the Creator of Heaven and Earth; he is thy Redeemer, King of Men and Angels, who holds universal Nature in his Hand, and moves all the Springs of it; who has the Keys of Hell and of Paraclete; *who shuts and no man opens, who opens and no man shuts.* In a word, 'tis he who possesses all these Excellencies and Beauties which we have mentioned: 'Tis the God of Love, and to whom thou shouldest Sacrifice all thy Loves. Be not deceiv'd, O my Heart, when thou renouncest one Vice for another; when thou Sacrificest Pleasure and Repose for Worldly Glory, this is to Sacrifice one Devil to another. But thou must Sacrifice to Piety and the Glory of God the Seven Unclean Spirits which are within thee.

O my Soul, the Sacrifice of thy Self-Love which God requires of thee, is, without doubt, the most difficult of the Works of Sanctification; for we value ourselves more than all the Universe besides: But consider also, that the Reward of this Labour cannot be fully represented; for it is useful both in Life and in Death; both in Heaven and upon Earth. During the present Life this Sacrifice of Self-Love will put thee in a state of perfect Tranquillity, it will extinguish thy Passions, those turbulent Guests of thy inward Man. Thou shalt have no more Pride, no more disorderly Desires, no more Anger and Resentment for Offences; no more Impatience nor Murmuring under thy Affliction, for when thou understandest that thou art not worthy of Love or Esteem,

As the Labour and Pains of this Sacrifice are Great, so also are the Rewards of it.

thou wilt easily pardon those Men, who will not sufficiently Love and Esteem thee; and thou wilt not think it strange, that God shou'd Exercise thee with such Chastisements as are necessary for the Purification of thy Love. At death thou wilt perfectly know the Vanity of thy Self-Love, and the Emptiness of all Earthly Grandeur: Then the feet of the Peacock will be discover'd, and Pride will have a fall: Then thou wilt feel the Weakness of all Human Supports; all of them will fail under thy feet, being suspended in the Air over a black and deep Abyss, thou wilt Embrace thy God more closely, and he will tie faster the knots of thy Love. In Heaven thou wilt find both the Source and the Ocean of Divine Love, there Love will reign as Disinterested as is possible for Love to be; there we shall see the depth and the extent of the Eternal Beauties; and there we shall know that we are unworthy of our Self-Love, because God only deserves to be lov'd.

A Prayer.

THE more I meditate upon the greatness and necessity of my Obligation, the more I find myself unable to fulfil them. 'Tis to thee, O my God, that I lift up my Soul; 'tis thy assistance which I implore, for the Sacrifice of my Self-Love: Come therefore, O Lord, do thyself this great Work, which thou commandest me. This unhappy disorderly Love of myself, is the head of the Old Man, which thou enjoynest me to Crucify.

Bring, bring hither, O my God, the sharp Sword of thy Divine Word, and cut off the Head of this Old Man; and the Head being taken off from this Body of Death and Sin, it will fall to the ground without Action, and without Life. The new Man will gain advantage by its fall; and finding itself at Liberty by the Death of this wretched Rival, it will increase, it will fructify, it will go on from strength to strength, until it attain at last, to the perfect Stature of my Lord Jesus. This is what I desire, O my God, do it, I pray thee. And to thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory through all Ages. *Amen.*

CHAP. IX.

Of the Third Sacrifice contain'd in the Fifth Degree of Divine Love, which is the Sacrifice of our own Judgment.

THE Love of God, which ought to be superior to all other Loves, and chiefly to the Love of ourselves, necessarily includes the Sacrifice of all that is peculiar to us, and whereof the Heart of Man makes Idols. We have already explain'd two of them, the Sacrifice of Self-Interest, and that of Self-Love: The Third is the Sacrifice of our own Judgment. We cannot fill up the extent of this great Commandment, *Thou shalt*

Love the Lord thy God more than thyself, unless we Sacrifice to him our Judgment, as well as our Love.

But here it will be ask'd in the first place, What is our Judgment? We shall not find it so difficult to define and explain it, as we did to explain Self-Love. All the World should know what it is, for all the World speaks of it: This is my Judgment, says one; this is not according to my Judgment, says another. It cannot be express'd how much Men are addicted to that which they call their own Judgment, chiefly those who falsely pretend to be Learned, who have not yet carried their Science so far, as to know that they know nothing as they ought to know: *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifieth.*

Descartes in
his Method.

We must not think that this addictedness to our own Judgment, is the Vice of Learned Men only. A great Wit of this Age said very well, that there is nothing so equally divided among Men as a good Judgment, for all the World think they have enough of it. We may meet with many who are sincere enough, to leave to others the glory of Learning, and even of a great Wit; but as to a good Judgment they will yield to no Body; and the little Wits are those who are most fond of their own Judgment.

This Idolatry which Men have for their own Judgment, appears in matters of Speculation, and in matters of Practice. As to Speculation, there is nothing more vain than Human Sciences; and yet those who have amass'd great Treasures of these Vanities become

become proud of them, and abound in their own Sense: They believe they have penetrated farther into the Secrets of Nature, than any others; they persuade themselves that they know all that can be known.

The saying of *Socrates* is very much commended; *This one thing I know, that I know nothing*. But this saying is not so good as some imagine; for this Philosopher was of the number of those whom we call *Pyrrhonians*, who doubt of every thing. This was a false and dangerous Wisdom; for these doubts are extended at this day to all things; to things visible and invisible, Temporal and Eternal, revealed and not revealed. Now there is nothing more dangerous in the affairs of the World, and in Religion, than this Sceptical Spirit. These People are so far from Sacrificing their own Judgment, as they seem to do, that no People do more idolize it; for it being their own Judgment, that there are no Truths evident and certain, they wou'd have all Men yield to this false Judgment.

Of the saying of *Socrates*,
This one thing I know, that I know nothing.

The dangers of *Pyrrhonism*.

If our own Judgment do mischief in Matters of Speculation, it does much more Hurt in Matters of Practice. Private Persons

wou'd have all things done according to their own Judgment, otherwise all things are spoil'd; every thing which is not done according to their Maxims and Rules, is irregular according to them. This fondness for our own Judgment, is that which produces in the Schools so many Disputes, so many Volumes, so many Writings, and even so many Quarrels; wherein after they have pour'd

The disorders caus'd by our own Judgment.

out much Ink, they also pour out their Choler, and at last their Blood. Whence come so many Suits in the Courts of Justice, so many studied Discourses, wherein every one endeavours to make his own Judgment Triumph? Whence come so many Sentences, and unjust Decrees, which are given upon the Bench, but from our own Judgment or unruly Passion?

Our own
Judgment
wou'd Go-
vern the
World.

Our own Judgment makes Inroads and Invasions into the Dominions of others. Our Passions and our own Judgment wou'd Govern the World. Every one has his own Maxims of Policy: One is a Royalist, another is a Republican; one wou'd have all things to be independent, and to become little Gods; and others wou'd have them to be no better than Slaves. And from this Fountain how many Wars, Seditions, Murders, Rebellions, Violent and Tyrannical Actions do we see proceed? We need only study the History of our own Age, and of our Miseries, to perceive the truth of what we now say.

There is yet something worse in it. This Judgment of our own destroys Religion and the Church; it wou'd govern the Universe as well as Societies; it Murmurs against God, and Blasphemes his Providence because God will not be Subject to the Judgment of Man, so as to do nothing but what he thinks fit.

Our own
Judgment is
the Source of
Heresies,
Schisms, and
Persecutions.

It is the Source of all Heresies. The Impious Man will not believe that there is God and a Providence, because he finds Hundred things in the Government of the World.

World, which are contradictory to his own judgment. The Heretick will not admit of any Mysteries; he would have all Religion explain as a Pike-Staff; he takes away all the difficulties he meets in his way. His own judgment makes him deny, That there can be more Persons than one, in one and the same Nature; that two different Natures can subsist in one only Person; that a God can become Man; that a Man can satisfy Divine Justice by his Death; that the punishment of Sins that are past can be Eternal; that the parts of a Body dissolv'd and reduc'd to Principles, can be Recollected. Besides these Heresies which our own judgment spreads in the World, it makes lamentable Schisms in it; it stirs up Wars, it inspires Rage into persecutors; it makes Torrents of Blood to run down.

These Truths taken in their general Notion, are receiv'd almost by all the World; for the World yields that our own judgment ought to be Sacrificed. But here let us add the Capriciousness of Man's Mind; all the World declaims against our own judgment. 'Tis a Tyrant, say some, that would command all Mens Minds; there is nothing else; but it must yield to Truth and Reason. Those who refuse to do so, are Opinionated, Selfconceited, and disturbers of the publick Peace. But when from these Generalities we descend to Particulars, all these Arguments, so just and so fine, vanish in smoke, and every one returns to the defence of his own judgment. The meaning therefore of all these fine Declamations, is no more

We wou'd, and we wou'd not, make a Sacrifice of our own Judgment.

more than this, That every one wou'd make an Idol of his own Judgment; at the feet of which all other Men ought to Sacrifice their own Judgment. This is sad, and nothing does more discover the Vanity of the Heart and Mind of Man,

To whom we should Sacrifice our own Judgment.

Nevertheless, let us take what they are willing to give us; which is, that we must Sacrifice our own Judgment. But to whom must we offer this Sacrifice? Every one will answer according to his own Prejudices and Interests, some say, that we should Sacrifice our own Judgment to Reason; others say, that we should do it to those who are wise and able Men; in each Art and Science. Others will have our own Judgment to be Sacrific'd to Authority, to the great number of Men, and to those of the great Age: In fine, those of the best Judgment say, that this Sacrifice of our own Judgment ought to be made to God; to his Word and to Faith. In all this there is some Truth, but there is much Ambiguity, which must be clear'd up, that we may shun the Sacrifice which Error spreads for us on all Hands.

In what sense we must Sacrifice our own Judgment to Reason.

In the first place, some say, that we must Sacrifice our own Judgment to Reason; this is true, but then we must carefully distinguish between Reason, as it is guided by Grace, and Reason guided either by Prejudices, or by Natural Light. We must Sacrifice our own Judgment to Reason enlightened by Grace: But as to Human Reason purely Human, we should be so far from taking it for a Guide, that we must despise it, and Sacrifice even itself.

our own Judgment which we should Sa-

We must believe skilful Artificers in their Who are the
 Aff. In Affairs purely Human this is Skilful Men
 surest way, and there can be no great whom we
 danger in it, since we meddle only with ought to
 temporal Things. But when we meddle trust.
 in Things Sacred, and the Interests of
 eternity, take good heed what ye do: Such
 one who will call himself the greatest
 in these Matters, will be to you a
 guide to lead you into an Abyfs. Hearken
 to the Teachers of Divine Knowledg, but
 combine together with them and after them,
 without a blind Obedience.

We must hearken to the Wifest, and these To consult
 commonly the Ancients: Yes, it will be and hear the
 well done to listen to the Ancients; but Ancients.
 take heed that these Ancients be such
 in the Bosom of the true Church:
 namely, that their Wisdom and Age do
 not make them prejudge against the Truth,
 nor do any prejudice to it. Receive the
 upon its own Account.

There is a certain Man in the World, Whether the
 is said to have all Wisdom in his own Pope is the
 He undertakes to Judge of Contro- Deity to
 which he does not understand; he whom we
 pronounces Oracles as Balaam's Ass did ought to Sa-
 without knowing what he says. crifice our
 This Man, we are told, we must Sacrifice own Judg-
 our own Judgment, but God forbid: He is ment.
 the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and we call
 Christ, and the Father of Lies.

Of Submis-
sion to the
Ancients.

Our own
Judgment
ought to be
Sacrific'd to
God alone.

At least 'tis unquestionable, as some
that we must Sacrifice our own Judgm
to the Authority of the most ancient Chu
The Fathers, the Fathers, cry they, as the
of old cry'd, *the Temple, the Temple*. God
bid that we should despise the true Anci
and the true Fathers of the Church:
would gladly be followers of them, and
Disciples, but so far only as they are
followers of Christ. After all, what have
less than the Fathers had? We are the
cient Church, since he is the most an
who is most distant from the day o
Birth. We are mounted upon their S
ders, and so we see farther than they;
have their Learning and Labours, and
have added to them our own.

We must not therefore Sacrifice our
Judgment to any, or all of the Persons
said; but to God alone, to Faith,
Holy Scripture; to God, speaking by
lation: Let us slay, and Sacrifice our
Judgment at the feet of Faith; by this
we shall destroy all the false glosses of H
In things obscure the Scripture will ex
itself; from whence will arise the cert
of Faith: Whereas, when we Sacrific
own Judgment to the most learned Me
those who pretend to be Wise, to the
cients, or to any other Man whatsoever
shall always remain doubtful, being
Children toss'd about with every wind of Do
In fine, by this means we shall render
true Ancients their Authority and thei
nour; for the true Ancients are thos
drunk at the Fountain-Head, such a
Ap

apostles were, and their immediate Disciples, who suck'd in their Doctrine from the Spring of Life.

But let us not wander too far from our Divine Love
Subject: We are enquiring to whom we is that which
ought to Offer the Sacrifice of our own makes the
Judgment, and we conclude that it ought to Sacrifice of
offer'd to Faith. Now we are speaking our own
Judgment.

Divine Love, and to this Love we ought
offer up our Sacrifices. To this I might
answer, that Faith and Charity, which is
Divine Love, are so closely united, that they
are mingled in an Hundred Places, like two
rivers, which running by one anothers side,
often cut and cross one another. But be-
cause, if the Sacrifice of our own Judgment is
offer'd to Faith, 'tis Divine Love which of-
fers it; it is the Sacrificer. What is it which
inspires us with that Spirit of Submission,
which obliges us to renounce our own Opi-
nion? 'Tis the Love which we have for
God, 'tis the Knowledg we have of
infinite Perfections, which are the Causes
and Motives of our Love. The Sovereign
Love which our God discovers for all
Mankind, makes us to renounce our own
Judgment, and submit to God's. We con-
sider God as original Truth, as immutable
eternal Truth; and under this Idea we
adore him infinitely, and because of this in-
finite Love, which we have for that Being
infinitely true, we yield an unlimited Sub-
mission to his Oracles and Commandments.
There is no Article wherein it is more
necessary to Sacrifice our own Judgment,
than that of Divine Providence. If we
should

We must Sa-
crifice our
own Judg-
ment, as to
the Subject
of Divine
Providence.

should believe our own blind Judgment, would think, that there is nothing more regular than the Government of the World. The Church, the Spouse of the Living God, the Pillar and ground of Truth, is crucified and Persecuted here in this World; our own Judgment inspires us with Inclinations to Rebel upon this occasion, and makes us say, *This might have been much better managed, if this evil shou'd have come upon the Kingdom, which do not at all invoke thy Power: No* it is not Faith only which checks these Inclinations to Murmuring; 'tis Love which inspires us, and tells us that all things are pleasant to him who Loves, and from him who Loves. 'Tis Love which Sacrifices our opposition to God, and therefore shall not be deceiv'd, if we call the Sacrifice of our own Judgment, one of the principal Sacrifices, which we owe to Divine Love. We must Love God more than ourselves; this is the Fifth Degree of Divine Love. Now there is nothing in us which we do more Idolize, than our own Judgment; from whence it is plain, that we are oblig'd to offer this Sacrifice to Divine Love.

A Prayer.

SUFFER not, O my God, my Judgment to exalt itself above thine. There may be some obscurity in thy Precepts, I do not always see plainly what thou intendest, when thou Commandest; but there is never any ambiguity in the Event, for certain

certainly willest all that thou dost; and what thou willest ought to be the Ruler of my Will. What thou willest is often harsh to my Heart, which always seeks after Joy: I think, that if I were to govern the World, all things wou'd be better managed, and my Children wou'd not be subjected, as I see they are, to the Rage of Tyrants: 'Tis my own Judgment which tells me this. But, O my God, make me to relish the Reasons thou hast, and which thou givest me in thy Word, of this doleful Dispensation to thy Church, and of that severe Mercy whereof I experience the Effects. O Holy Spirit, repeat perpetually to my Heart; *Shall not the Lord of all the Earth do Right?* Shall the Lord and Creator of the World lose his Right of doing in the World all that he pleases? *Shall the Thing form'd say to him that form'd it, why hast thou made me thus?* O thee, therefore, O thou Lord of the World, and Sovereign of Men, whatsoever thou dost, be Honour and Glory through all Ages. *Amen.*

CHAP. X.

C H A P. X.

The Fourth Sacrifice contain'd in the Fifth Degree of Divine Love, is the Sacrifice of our own Will.

Divine Love cannot endure any other Lord, but God: It extirpates Tyrants, and after having Sacrific'd our own Judgment, which is the Tyrant of the Mind, it attacks our own Will, which is the Tyrant of the Heart.

A Definition
of our own
Will.

There is something of ambiguity in the Terms, *our own Will*; and therefore they must be Explain'd before we Treat of the Sacrifice. It seems, that all the acts of our Will, but chiefly those which are done by Constraint or Violence, are Acts of our own Will. We will all that we will, not by the will of another, but by our own Will. When we will Love God, labour to promote his Glory, Love our Neighbours, and endeavour to do the Good, do not we truly will it, and with our Will which is our own? Nevertheless it is true, that these Terms, *our own Will*, signify always something that is bad: In *Fasts*, said the Prophet *Esay*, Chap. 58. *Ye find, or ye do your own Will*. Our Will is that which proceeds from our Judgment, and from our false Opinions; a Will whose blind fierceness is push'd forwards, and inspir'd by our Passions; that what the Apostle calls the *affections of the*

Rom. 8.
and Gal. 5.

and the Lusts of the Flesh. These Wills of our own are always Carnal, and have no other Object but Temporal Things, and the Satisfaction of the Flesh.

All the bad Wills which are in us, are properly call'd our own Wills: For all our good-wills are much less our Wills, than God's Wills; and on the contrary, all that Evil in us, proceeds from ourselves. The commandments, which are the Rule of our duty, are call'd, - the Will of God; *Teach me to do thy Will, for thou art my God, saith a faithful Soul, Psal. 143. 10. Behold, here I am, as written of me, that I should do thy Will.* Our own Will, which we are forbidden to follow, is always put in opposition to the Will of God.

We need not search much into this Will *Our own Will is the Cause of all our Evils;* our own, to understand, that it is the Cause of all our Immoralities. The Cove-

as Man would be Rich, and the Ambitious man would be Great: This is their own Will; for the Love of God is quite contrary; since God has taught us, that *Godliness is great Gain;* the true Riches, and the solid Greatness of a wise Christian.

The Revengeful, the Voluptuous, and all other Vicious Persons, have their own Will, which is directly contrary to the Will of God. This Will of our own is the Cause of Rebellions; every one would Command, and no body would Obey: And those whose Wills are most Vigorous, and Passions most violent, commonly carry the Day. Wo to this Country, when a Slave Reigns over it: Wo to those Societies, wherein the Impious become the Head, whereas they should be only

only the Feet, and even the Dirt under the Feet. Wo to the Soul, when it's own Wills and wanton and brutish Passions, mount the Throne, and drive away Reason.

If our own Wills are the Cause of all our Crimes, they are also the Cause of all our Punishments; for the Crime and Punishment proceed from one and the same Source. God does not fail to do his own Will, when we have done ours. 'Tis plain, therefore, that we can do nothing of greater Importance to our Salvation, than to offer this Sacrifice of our own Will, which Divine Love and our great Interest require of us. We must now see to whom, and how this Sacrifice is to be made.

Five Idols in the World, to which we sacrifice our own Will.

In the first place then, we must consider to whom. I find five false Deities, to whom we Sacrifice, not only our own Will, but even the Divine Will. 1st, Vanity. 2d, Custom. 3d, Complaisance. 4th, Unjust Obedience: And 5th, False Worship.

Vanity: Among those Women, who waste what they have in foolish Expences, in Gaming, in fine Cloaths, and in Debauchery, there are some who tell us, I have a good Mind to refrain from this, for I ruin my self in Body, Honour, and Estate. But what then? I must appear to be somebody; as long as I am in the World, I must endeavour to procure Honour and Esteem in it. This is the real Discourse of People who have no Merit. But true Merit only acquires Reputation, and procures us esteem in the World, and not these foolish Vanities, which are admired only by Fools, and are the Contempt of all wise Men.

Cust

Custom; Is the second Idol, to which we sacrifice our Wills. 'Tis ~~the~~ *Custom*, say the Men of this World, to Drink, to Eat, to play, and commit all sorts of Excess; How can we be wise in the midst of all this? How can we resist the Torrent? O! would to God I could break off these unhappy Bands! but I am carry'd away by the Torrent; 'tis against my Will, Wo to you worldly Men, since you are in this Condition: Ye would not, and yet you Sacrifice your Wills and Inclinations to the World, and to the Devil. Ye are led to Hell; ye go thither, as it were, against your Will: but nevertheless ye go thither, and your place will be found there.

Complaisance, is the third Tyrant. I have no Inclination to this kind of Life, says another, I never try'd to commit such an Action: but a Friend of mine desir'd it of me, and I sacrific'd my Will to him. O false Friends, do not become your Tempters! you ought to place them in the Rank of Devils, and say to them, get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an Offence to me; for thou hast no Enemies more dangerous, than such Friends.

Obedience, is the fourth Tyrant. My King, says a Sovereign, commanded me, say some, and I made to him a Sacrifice of my Will. What sad Examples do we see at this Day of this infamous Sacrifice! How many times we have told, 'tis against my Will that I persecute you, 'tis against my Will, that I yield to the Temptation; but the King will have it. At what Tribunal will this miserable Example be found of any Use? It will not be admitted.

mitted before God, when he will tell you,
It was better to obey God, than Men.

False Worship, is the fifth Tyrant. There are in the Church such Tyrants as would usurp all the Rights of God, and do exact a blind Obedience. 'Tis not only the Man of Sin, the Anti-Christ, who would be obey'd without any Enquiry; for there is not a Superior in the Convent, there is not a Priest among the Confessors, who does not demand the Sacrifice of our own Will. But God will one day confound these hypocritical and insolent Men, who under Pretence of Piety and Devotion, usurp the Honour which is due to Him only.

*The Sacrifice
 of our own
 Will ought to
 be offer'd to
 God only.*

All these therefore abovemention'd, and so many false Gods, so many Idols, to whom we ought to refuse the Sacrifice of our Will: God alone is He, to whom we ought to do this Homage. Sacrifices are not due but to the true God: Our own Will is the Fat of the Sacrifice, which must be reserv'd for the great Altar of Whole-Burnt-Offerings. The Sacrifice of the Will, signifies a perfect *Devotedness*, and therefore is due only to God. This Devotedness has given the name Devotion, which is a Vertue, that has God only for its Object. If we have a mind to part with our Will, we must put it into good Hands; but besides the Divine Will, there are no Hands either Good or Safe: And therefore we must deliver up our Will to God only; for, *The will of God is good, pleasant, and perfect.* If the Empire of our Will were to be given to any Creature, it would be better that we should keep it to ourself.

'Tis allow'd, that we should hear the Counsel of the Wise, and 'tis often useful to follow it: but a blind Obedience and the Sacrifice of the Will is due to God only.

Let us now see how this Sacrifice of our own Will ought to be made. We have a great Example of it in him who was given to us for a Pattern, that we should follow his Steps: *Not my will,* said he, *but thine be done.* *Jesus has given us a perfect Pattern of sacrificing our own Will,* There is a great difficulty in this Example. We have said, that our own Will is always bad, and that it signifies something that is Evil: Yet the Lord had a Will of his own, since he made a Sacrifice of it. Had he then something that was bad? No. But we say there are two sorts of Evils; one is call'd the Evil of Sin, and the other the Evil of Punishment: Our own Will wills the first, and not the second; it would gladly commit the Sin, but it would not endure the Punishment. Our own Will, with respect to both these Objects, has those first Motions, of which the Soul is said to have no Command. The first Motions which incline us to the Evil of Sin, are bad; and Jesus Christ felt none of these, neither could he feel them: but the first Motions which are averse to the Evil of Punishment, and incline the Soul to avoid Suffering, cannot be bad, when the Soul submits them, and Sacrifices them to the Will of God. Our Saviour therefore might very innocently have these Reluctances, which are contrary to Pain; 'tis Nature which does this, and Nature which is innocent, as well as that which is Criminal. Our Saviour had not Sacrific'd this Will of

mitted before God, when he will tell you,
It was better to obey God, than Men.

False Worship, is the fifth Tyrant. There are in the Church such Tyrants as would usurp all the Rights of God, and do exact a blind Obedience. 'Tis not only the Man of Sin, the Anti-Christ, who would be obey'd without any Enquiry; for there is not a Superior in the Convent, there is not a Priest among the Confessors, who does not demand the Sacrifice of our own Will. But God will one day confound these hypocritical and insolent Men, who under Pretence of Piety and Devotion, usurp the Honour which is due to Him only.

*The Sacrifice
 of our own
 Will ought to
 be offer'd to
 God only.*

All these therefore abovemention'd, are so many false Gods, so many Idols, to whom we ought to refuse the Sacrifice of our Will. God alone is He, to whom we ought to do this Homage. Sacrifices are not due but to the true God: Our own Will is the Fat of the Sacrifice, which must be reserv'd for the great Altar of Whole-Burnt-Offerings. The Sacrifice of the Will, signifies a perfect *Devotedness*, and therefore is due only to God. This Devotedness has given the name Devotion, which is a Vertue, that has God only for its Object. If we have a mind to part with our Will, we must put it into good Hands; but besides the Divine Will, there are no Hands either Good or Safe: And therefore we must deliver up our Will to God only; for, *The will of God is good, pleasant, and perfect.* If the Empire of our Will were to be given to any Creature, it would be better that we should keep it to ourselves.

'Tis allow'd, that we should hear the Counsel of the Wise, and 'tis often useful to follow it: but a blind Obedience and the Sacrifice of the Will is due to God only.

Let us now see how this Sacrifice of our own Will ought to be made. We have a great Example of it in him who was given to us for a Pattern, that we should follow his Steps: *Not my will,* said he, *but thine be done.* *Jesus has given us a perfect Pattern of sacrificing our own Will,* There is a great difficulty in this Example. We have said, that our own Will is always bad, and that it signifies something that is Evil: Yet the Lord had a Will of his own, since he made a Sacrifice of it. Had he then something that was bad? No. But we say there are two sorts of Evils; one is call'd the Evil of Sin, and the other the Evil of Punishment: Our own Will wills the first, and not the second; it would gladly commit the Sin, but it would not endure the Punishment. Our own Will, with respect to both these Objects, has those first Motions, of which the Soul is said to have no Command. The first Motions which incline us to the Evil of Sin, are bad; and Jesus Christ felt none of these, neither could he feel them: But the first Motions which are averse to the Evil of Punishment, and incline the Soul to avoid Suffering, cannot be bad, when the Soul submits them, and Sacrifices them to the Will of God. Our Saviour therefore might very innocently have these Reluctancies, which are contrary to Pain; 'tis Nature which does this, and Nature which is innocent, as well as that which is Criminal. Our Saviour had not Sacrific'd this Will of

his own, and his Reluctancies to his Passion, we had been lost; for 'tis this Passion which has sav'd us: And 'tis the *Voluntariness*, and the Sacrifice of the Will, which renders these Sufferings Profitable to our Salvation.

Two great Duties contain'd in the Sacrifice of our Will.

This Reflection leads us to another: The Sacrifice of our own Will does plainly consist in this, that we conform our Will to that of God's, as Jesus Christ did; *Not my will, but thy will be done*. Now, this Sacrifice, or Conforming our Will to that of God, contains in it two great Duties. The first is, to sacrifice what we would, and God wills not; the second is, to Will that which God Wills and we will not. What we Will, and God Wills not, is the indulging our Passions, and vicious Desires, such as Avarice, Ambition, Revenge, Pleasure, &c. These are the furious Bulls and the fatted Beasts, which must be sacrific'd to the Will of God, by saying to him; *Not my will, but thy will be done*.

The other part of our Sacrifice, is to will what God wills, and we will not; as Adversity, Pain, Prisons, Tortures, Banishment, and Death. This is the Sacrifice which the Saviour of the World offer'd; He would gladly have avoided Death, and the horror of his Agony, when he said, *Let this cup pass from me*: But for the Salvation of Mankind, he sacrific'd these imperfect Wills before he sacrific'd himself. The Sacrifice of the Passion is harsh, when it is to be made; but it is pleasant when it is made, because of the Tranquillity which the Soul enjoys, when it has Crucify'd, and sacrific'd these Disturbances of its Peace: This is present Payment

the Pains it has taken. But the Sacrifice of its Joys and Repose, of its Liberty and Life, is yet more harsh ; for 'tis very hard to deliver ourselves bound Hand and Foot, to the Sacrificer of our Souls, and of our Wills, who will put us upon Crosses, and throw us into Fires.

We must also make a Distinction, the better to discover the Nature and Manner of this Sacrifice. Those who suffer great Torments, and most cruel Pains, are for the most part expos'd to these Sufferings against their Will. The Gout, the Gravel, a burning Fever, a defluxion of Rheum, will put a miserable Body to great Torment, and make him cry out, and shed Tears, without waiting for his own Consent. 'Tis not therefore his own Will which engages him in this case, but only the Will of God. Yet there is a way to make a Sacrifice of our own Will in these Involuntary Sufferings ; and that is, by a perfect submission, by bowing the head, by kissing the Rod, by adoring in Patience the Judgments of God, justifying his dispensations, while we condemn ourselves and say ; *Thou art Righteous, O my God, and we are sinners* : Thou willest that I suffer most cruel Evils, I will the same also, because thou willest it, and thou willest it most justly.

In Sufferings which are involuntary, how to Sacrifice our own Will.

But there is another kind of Sacrifice of our own Will, which is more Noble and more Excellent ; and that is, the Sufferings purely Voluntary, to which we submit, because the Glory of God, and the Interest of Truth and Righteousness require it. Such

These Sufferings which are Voluntary, are the true Sacrifice of our own Will.

is the Sacrifice of our Martyrs and Confessors. Three Words of a Renunciation would deliver them, and restore to them their Liberty, Estate, and Life: But they will neither have their Estate nor Life at this Price: They make a Sacrifice to God, and to his Truth, of their own will, which would Sacrifice, if one would trust it, the Will of God to their temporal Interest.

*The Sacrifice
of our own
Will is the
highest degree
of Divine
Love.*

There remains now nothing about this important Subject, but one Truth to be prov'd which is, That this Sacrifice of our own Will is the highest degree of Divine Love; That this Sacrifice is due to that Love which is commanded, as being the most important of all the Duties contain'd in this Commandment; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul; Thou shalt love him above all things and more than all things.* Divine Love ought to make the Sacrifice of thy Wills and Passions. These Passions are strong and violent, they must therefore be deliver'd into such Hands as are stronger, who can master and slay them: And these strong Hands are the Hands of Divine Love; *For this love is stronger than death.* 'Tis true, that the Fear which we call Servile, the Terror of Hell is able to check the Ebullitions of Carnal Affections: But this Fear does not destroy them yet it will not be useless in making our Sacrifice, for it will bind the Victim: But the Victim being Bound, it must be carry'd to the feet of pure Love, which will stick the Knife into it's Throat, and make all the unclean Blood run out, which it may have in it's Veins. Moreover, this Sacrifice is the

which is call'd, the continual Sacrifice, the Sacrifice of Evening and Morning, which ought never to be interrupted. This is what our Great Master signifies to us, by putting into our Mouth that daily Prayer; *Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven: Thy will, O God, not our own Will; thy Will, I say,* however harsh and painful it may appear to us.

A Prayer.

ON whatsoever side I turn my Heart, I find in it Reluctancies to all thy Will. Thou willest, O my God, that I should be Chast, Sober, Temperate, Charitable, Patient under Injuries, and that I should do good to my Enemies. My Heart, my Heart, O my Saviour, Resists, Struggles, Fights against all these Duties. My Jesus has employ'd me to pluck out my Eyes, and to cut off my Right-Hand, when they are an offence unto me. I understand very well the force of his Reason, which is, that it will be better for me to enter either Blind or lame into Eternal Glory, than to have two Eyes, and two Hands, and be cast into Hell. This Truth is so sensible, that I have nothing to oppose against it; but my Will rebels against my Understanding, and will not follow what it judges best. I find yet greater reluctance in me, when thou callest me to offer, to bear thy Cross, and to receive with a perfect Submission, Poverty, Pain, Prison, Tortures, and Death itself. O Lord, my God, thou only canst conquer this rebellious

bellious Heart, subdue it therefore, subject it to thy Yoke, that I may do, or suffer thy Will with Chearfulness. Alas! O my sweet Redeemer, do not expose me to too severe Trials; spare me, as to the most heavy blows of thy Justice; let no Temptation seize me, but what is common to Men, and together with the Temptation, provide way to Escape, that I may be able to bear it. Do this for the Love of thy self. And thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Honour, and Glory, thro' all Ages. Amen

CH A P. II.

Of the Fifth Sacrifice contain'd in the fifth Degree of DIVINE LOVE, which is the Sacrifice or Mortification of our excellencies.

In the Temple of Divine Love, some Victims are Sacrific'd, which are not Clean.

UPON the Altars of the old Temple none but clean Beasts and Offerings were laid: It is not altogether the same with the Sacrifices, which are to be made in the Temple of Divine Love. We have discours'd of four *Proprieties* which ought to be sacrific'd to God, by this Divine Love, Self-Interest, Self-Love, our own Judgment, and our own Will. These Victims, are many Beasts, which are to be offer'd in Sacrifice, not as clean Beasts, but because they are not Clean, and because they are a hindrance to the Purity of our Worship. here follows a fifth *Propriety*, which will

the matter of a fifth Sacrifice; and that is, the Sacrifice of our own Excellencies, which seems to be a good and pure Victim, and worthy to be presented to God.

The Idea of a Sacrifice includes these two Things, the Destruction and Consecration of it. *The Destruction*, for the Victim Sacrific'd ought to be destroy'd: And this is the way in which our Four first *Proprieties* ought to be Sacrific'd to God; they ought to be destroy'd. *The Consecration*; for the Thing Sacrific'd was devoted and Sacrific'd to God. It seems that our fifth *Propriety*, which is our own Excellency, ought to be Sacrific'd to God, in this way, *i. e.* in the way of Consecration; because this Sacrifice is made when we Sacrifice to God, from a Principle of Love, of all that we have, which is Good and Excellent.

But what have we that is Good? Many good Things, with many that are bad: For Man is the oddest Composition that is in Nature; he is an incomprehensible heap of mean and great Things: And from hence come the opposite Titles and Epithets which are given him by wise Men. He is call'd a little World, the King of Animals, the Abridgement of the Wonders of the Universe, and the Master-piece of the Creator; and on the other hand, 'tis said, that Man is more vain than vanity itself, that he is a Shadow, the dream of a Shadow, a Flower which appears in the morning with great Pomp, and at Night is buried in the Bosom of the Earth. His Portraiture is made to consist, not only of Vanity and Misery, but also of Ignorance and Malice, and

Man is an incomprehensible Composition.

and a Depravation which knows no Bound and they are in the right who represent him so.

Nevertheless, there remains still Excellency enough in Man, to serve for Matter the fifth Sacrifice of our *Proprieties*: His Memory, his Imagination, his Understanding, his Free-will, which cannot be forced are beautiful Features of the Image of God. Add to all this his acquir'd Gifts, his Sciences, Arts, Experience, and Human Vertues which appear even in those People who are not Inspir'd, nor guided by the Spirit of God. Besides these natural and acquir'd Gifts which are a degree of Excellency in Man there is in the Saints another Excellency which belongs to them, because it is in them but which does not proceed from them, and so does not absolutely belong to them. Such are the Gifts of Grace, the Christian Vertues, Faith, Hope, Charity, &c. This Excellency comes from God, who bestows on them these Gifts, and in this respect it is not their own Excellency, 'tis the Excellency of God. But nevertheless, because this Excellency is in the Saints upon Earth, it may be call'd *their own Excellency*; and may serve as Matter for the Sacrifice whereof we now Treat.

Of the deep
Abasement of
ourselves.

We must know that this Sacrifice of our own Excellency is that, which is call'd otherwise in Christian Morality, *the abasement of ourselves*, which is so essential a Part of Spiritual Worship, that without it, it is impossible to please God. Of this Abasement we are now to Treat.

The true Abasement of ourselves is compos'd of Reflection and Action ; that is, we must reflect upon our own Emptiness, and be fully persuaded of it ; and after that we must act agreeably to this Knowledge, that we are really of no Value.

To persuade ourselves of this Truth, that we are really nothing Worth, we may call to mind the Reflections which we formerly made when we discours'd of Love to the creatures. We must remember, that we are nothing worth ; first, as we are Creatures ; Secondly, as we are sinful Creatures.

We must be fully persuaded of our own Emptiness by way of Reflection.

We have receiv'd from God the Being of our nature, which Sin has not quite destroy'd ; but it has taken from us the Being of Grace which was given to us, and that of Glory which was promis'd to us ; and so it has robb'd us more than two Thirds of our Excellency, and our Being. If we consider Man, in his original, he was Holy and Happy : This made three sorts of Beings. Man has preserv'd his Being, *i. e.* his Essence and his Existence ; but he has lost both his Holiness and Happiness, which are the two principal Parts of his Being.

Thus Sin and Wickedness destroys Man in every respects. *The Holy Being*, and *the Happy Being* are entirely destroy'd, and the *third Being* remains in such a State, that the damn'd Souls would look upon final Annihilation as an act of Mercy, which they are continually aspiring after, but never hope to obtain. For which Reason they cry out, *Let the Mountains cover us, &c. fall upon us ; sink into the Abyss, take from us all Sight and feeling, Life and Being.*

These

These general Reflections are not sufficient to possess us with so great a Sense of our Unworthiness, as we ought to have for our fifth and last Sacrifice. Let us therefore enquire into Particulars.

The knowledge of our inward Emptiness.

In the first place we must consider the emptiness of our Understanding, viz. That *we know nothing as we ought to know: The natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, 1 Cor. 2.*

The second emptiness is that of our Hearts, which are *Deceitful and desperately Wicked*, and difficult to be Sounded. The third is, the emptiness of our Minds, which cannot have one good Thought; *the Thoughts of the Heart of Man are only evil continually.*

The fourth is, the emptiness of our Wills, which are utterly unable to deliver themselves from the Load of Corruption that lies upon them, and which cannot of themselves have any good Motion. The fifth is the *abatement of our Strength*. For when the Spirit of Bondage, being awaken'd by the Works of Providence, and by the general concurrence of God, hath excited in us good Designs, we have no strength to perform them. We can very well consent to the Law that it is good; we can take pleasure in the Law of God as to the inward Man; but we find not *this means any strength in us to do what is good.* The sixth is, the emptiness of our Virtues, which are in the sight of God as an unclean Cloth, for being separated from Grace they are acts of Self-Love and Interest, and not acts of Divine Love.

The

There is therefore nothing but emptiness in our inward Man; and the farther we penetrate into it, the Abyss of inward emptiness will appear the deeper. Add to all this the emptiness of external Things; for when we look upon Things without us, we see ourselves on all sides encompass'd with things that are really nothing worth. *The glory of the World is a worthless thing, which appears with splendor for a Moment, and then vanishes away. Riches are worthless things, which take the Wings of an Eagle and fly away out of our Hands. Our Sciences are worthless things, for they are compos'd of May-be's and Uncertainties. Our Wisdom is a worthless thing, for unless it has its source in God, it is quickly destroy'd to our confusion. All our Goods, and all our Labours are nothing worth; for they are vanity and vexation of Spirit. Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of Man; and this is that which is never destroy'd.* Thus I have shown you the sure way to arrive at the true Abasement which Divine Love requires of us.

The Emptiness of External Things.

After Meditation comes Action; and the Abasement consists in this Action. Perhaps a wicked Christian, and a pretended Wise-man cannot oppose all these humbling truths, which are sensible Matters of Fact; but he will become never the better, neither more Humble, nor less Proud: We must therefore perform the following acts of Humiliation.

This Abasement consists in Action.

In the first place, thou must take all thy Privileges, and amass together all thy pretended

The first Act of Humiliation.

The

tended or real Gifts, all the faculties of thy Soul, all the strength of thy Body, all the vigour of thy Heart, and carry them to be Sacrific'd at the feet of God, confessing, that *thy Goods put together cannot extend to him.* And that they can never fill up that infinite space and emptiness, which separates thee from the Being infinitely perfect. Thou must put thy Riches, Honours, Grandeur, Thorns, Crowns, Dignities, Offices, Authority, Empire, Magnificence, in the fire of Divine Love. The Women must bring in all the Beauties and Charms, their Pomps and Vanities, their Ornaments, their Rings and Jewels, not to make of them a Calf of Gold, and an Idol of Jealousy, but to make an Ephod to the Lord, a Sacrifice of Humiliation, by confessing with perfect Sincerity that all this is more vain than Vanity itself. The Learned Man after his infinite Labours must come in, and lay down at the feet of the Father of Light his great heap of Sciences, the Histories he hath Collected together, and his Conjectures, and consecrate to the Honour of God, all that does not tend directly to his own Glory, and the Glory of other Men. He must confess that one Science is only necessary, which is the knowledg of the Saints, and that is, to know God, so far as is necessary that we may love him. The Just Man must despise his own Righteousness, and look upon it as a Menstruous Cloth; but he must distinguish between the Work of God and of Man. He forbid that we should hate our own Labour, for it is God that Works it in us: Nay, we must not so much as despise it; but we must

restore it to God who wrought it, present
it to him for an Offering as the Fruit of his
Love, and say, 'Tis not I, but the Grace of God
that is in me; this is a Treasure, but my God
has put it in Earthen Vessels, that all the Glory
may be ascrib'd to him, and nothing to ourselves.
Thou must acknowledge that all thy strength
is defective, that all the faculties of thy Soul
are nothing but Darknes and Corruption;
that thou art nothing but Dust and Ashes in his
presence; that thou art not worthy that he should
come under thy Roof; and that thou deservest
not, tho' thou wert the greatest of the Pro-
phets, to untie the Latchet of the Shoes of the
Son of David. O ye proud Humble Men,
who make Profession of Mortification, and
the Humiliation of yourselves, and who
come to us, to talk of your Merits: Who a-
round so much in them that ye offer some
of them to others; who Preach up your
own Strength and the Virtue of your Free-
will; who Sacrifice to your own Nets, and burn
incense to your own Drags; get ye gone, ye
never yet knew any thing as ye ought to
know, while ye esteem yourselves to be some-
thing. This is the first act of Humiliation.
The second is, That, after ye have Sacri-
ficed upon the Altar of Gold which is in the
most Holy Place, all that belongs to you, ye
must humble yourselves in the presence of
God; that ye may carry away with you his
blessings, and not return empty and destitute
of every Thing. Ye are *stript of all your*
Proprieties; this is the Term which our My-
stical Divines use. Ye have renounc'd all
your Properties, i. e. your Self-Interest, Self-
love, &c. and made a Sacrifice of them,

The second
Act of Hu-
miliation.

R

to

to God ; and thus you are in a manner reduced to nothing ; but ye must seek for a new Being in God. You have Sacrific'd your Gifts, seek after those of God, beg of him a Divine Faith, which will supply the place of your Natural Light ; a Holy Spirit to fill up the emptiness, which the Spirit of the World will leave within you upon it's departure : Heavenly Consolations which will supply the place of these Carnal Pleasures ye have Sacrific'd to God ; a Will that is upright and fill'd with Grace, to supply the emptiness of your Wills ; an Almighty Grace, to supply that Impotence, ye found in yourselves *to do Good*.

The third
Act of Humiliation.

The third Act of Humiliation, will be a return into your own Breast, and visit those Places where ye have found your Emptiness, that ye may fill them with his Knowledge, good Habits, and good Works. By this means you will destroy your old Man, but restore the new Man : *Behold, things are pass'd away, all things are become new, be ye therefore new Creatures*. Ye are nothing, this nothing is in your inward Man, but the Eternal Word, he who was with the Father, when he created the sensible World, has now produced out of your nothing a new World, *new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness*. In the emptiness of your understanding he will place the supernatural knowledge of his reviv'd Mysteries. In the emptiness of your Wills he will produce new Uprightness, and all the Habits of Christian Vertues : In the emptiness of your Hearts he will pour out *that Love of God* which

is shed abroad in our Hearts by the holy Spirit,
Rom. 5.

But know, that ye must put your Hand We must co-
to the Work. It is not requir'd of you that operate with
ye should barely *suffer the thing to be done*: Grace.

The nothing oppos'd to Grace, is not alto-
gether like the nothing oppos'd to Nature;
as to the latter no more is requir'd, but to
suffer the thing to be done; for it cannot be
otherwise, because it is a *pure nothing*, with-
out any Action: It cannot resist the Crea-
tor, and therefore it obeys with all readi-
ness. Light is demanded from its darkness,
that there be *Light*, and immediately the Light
was produc'd. The nothing oppos'd to
Grace resists as much as it can: Light and
Righteousness has a long time Commanded
before this nothing Obey'd. Consider,
therefore, O devout Soul, who would'st by
Humiliation be united with thy God, con-
sider, I say, thy Nothingness, possess thy mind
with a sense of thy Miseries. Believe in thy
mind the folly of Prejudices in thy Heart,
the fury of Passions, and destroy all these;
and this will be to destroy thyself, since thy
self-Love, thy Ambition, thy Avarice, thy
Wrath, thy desires of Revenge, are become
another thyself.

But thou canst do nothing without Grace;
ye must therefore wait for it: No, remem-
ber the Maxim which I told you before, ye
must labour for Works, as if there were no
Grace, and pray for Grace as if there were
no Works. Run before Grace as if ye would
oblige it to come, and co-operate faithfully
with it, when thou feelest that it is come.

The prevention of Grace belong to God; these Operations are often concealed from thyself, for the change of the Heart is wrought by hidden means; but this ought not to hinder thee from acting both without and within, after such a manner that thou mayest be sensible of it thyself, and also make it visible to thy Neighbours.

This is the true Idea of our Humiliation, and these are the Acts of it; it remains now for us to show, that this Humiliation is of absolute necessity for the exercise of Divine Love, and that 'tis one of its most excellent Sacrifices: This is not difficult to understand.

Four Reasons which show that Divine Love requires this Humiliation.

In the first place, the Meditation and Contemplation of the Excellencies of God, is, as we have said, an Act of Divine Love, and a powerful Motive to Love. Now nothing is more proper to inflame us in our Meditation of Divine Love, than profound Reflections upon our own Emptiness: One contrary illustrates another. God never appears to us so great, as when we look upon his Greatness in opposition to our Littleness, his Strength in opposition to our Weakness, his Eternity and Infinity in opposition to the narrow Bounds within which we are confin'd, and his infinite Purity and Holiness, in opposition to our Pollutions and our Crimes.

Secondly, Divine Love includes a desire of Union. Our Love knows our Weakness, and it seeks out Supports to sustain us; but not finding them in itself, nor in the World, it embraces its God most closely, and makes him the Object of its most Ardent Desire. Now, 'tis this profound attention to our

own Emptiness, which produces this Sense of our Weakness, and consequently creates in us an infinite Love for the Being infinitely Good, infinitely Powerful, and infinitely Perfect.

Besides, Divine Love is not fortify'd in our Heart, but only in Proportion, as Self-Love is weakn'd in it. We must therefore give the deadly Blow to Self-Love, the Mortal Enemy of all Vertues, by considering deeply our Emptiness, and all the Parts of it, by Diving into all its Abysses, to discover, that we are not only worthy of our own Contempt, but of our Hatred: And by this means we will love nothing in ourselves, but God, and that which comes from God.

In fine, the Inconsistency of the Love of God, and the Love of the World, is a Truth of Faith, since St. *John* has reveal'd to us, that *he who loves the World, the love of the Father is not in him.* We must therefore destroy this Love of the World, and this we shall do, by considering more and more our own Nothingness. When we have destroy'd this Self, that part of the World, which we love best, it will not be difficult to destroy in us the Love of the rest of the World, which we love less. 'Tis certain, that the Destruction of these two Loves do necessarily follow upon one another, as these two Loves do mutually Establish one another. We reckon as part of *ourselves*, all that is External to us: For our Pride and our Vanity are maintain'd by the Vain Poms of the World, its Goods and its Riches, when we possess them, or rather, when we are possess'd with a desire of acquiring them; when we have them not,

or believe that we have not enough of them. Thus Divine Love is Banish'd from the Heart, by the Possession of Worldly Advantages, or by the insatiable desire of having them, or by the deadly Vexation for not having them. We shall never therefore establish Divine Love in our Hearts until we have Sacrific'd all other Loves, and particularly that of our own Excellency, whereby we Attribute to ourself a false Grandeur, which does not belong to us, and which is altogether Accidental to us.

For a Conclusion of these five Sacrifices contain'd in the fifth Degree of Love, let us acknowledge that he who has Sacrific'd his own Interest to the Interest of God, his Self-Love to the Love of God, his own Judgement to the Judgement of God, and Divine Revelation, his own Will to the Will of God, and his own Excellency to the Excellency of God, has attain'd to that degree of Love which loves God above all Things, and more than all Things, without excepting *me* and himself.

A Prayer.

ALAS! O my God! I am full of Myself and of the Idea of my own Excellencies! Nevertheless I know and understand very well, that all my Excellency is the Excellency of Dust and Ashes: This false Idea which I have of myself, produces in me Pride. I ought to abase myself, and to acquire Humility a Vertue, which thou lovest much, a Vertue to which thou hast given

so great Epithets, and made so great Promises. *For, O God, thou resistest the Proud, and givest Grace to the Humble. To whom shall I have regard, sayst thou, but to him who is lowly in Heart, contrite in Spirit, and who trembles at my Word? Whosoever humbles himself shall be Exalted.* May it therefore please thee, O my God, to inspire me with a Holy Humility; Cast down to the Ground this proud Heart, and never cease to Attack it by thy Almighty Grace, until thou hast humbled it in Dust and Ashes. To thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory, thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

R 4

THE

or believe that we have not enough of them. Thus Divine Love is Banish'd from the Heart, by the Possession of Worldly Advantages, or by the insatiable desire of having them, or by the deadly Vexation for not having them. We shall never therefore establish Divine Love in our Hearts until we have Sacrific'd all other Loves, and particularly that of our own Excellency, whereby we Attribute to ourself a false Grandeur, which does not belong to us, and which is altogether Accidental to us.

For a Conclusion of these five Sacrifices contain'd in the fifth Degree of Love, let us acknowledge that he who has Sacrific'd his own Interest to the Interest of God, his Self-Love to the Love of God, his own Judgement to the Judgement of God, and Divine Revelation, his own Will to the Will of God, and his own Excellency to the Excellency of God, has attain'd to that degree of Love which loves God above all Things, and more than all Things, without excepting *me* and himself.

A Prayer.

ALAS! O my God! I am full of Myself and of the Idea of my own Excellencies! Nevertheless I know and understand very well, that all my Excellency is the Excellency of Dust and Ashes: This false Idea which I have of myself, produces in me Pride I ought to abase myself, and to acquire Humility a Vertue, which thou lovest much, a Vertue to which thou hast give

so great Epithets, and made so great Promises. For, O God, thou resistest the Proud, and givest Grace to the Humble. To whom shall I have regard, sayst thou, but to him who is lowly in Heart, contrite in Spirit, and who trembles at my Word? Whosoever humbles himself shall be Exalted. May it therefore please thee, O my God, to inspire me with a Holy Humility; Cast down to the Ground this proud Heart, and never cease to Attack it by thy Almighty Grace, until thou hast humbled it in Dust and Ashes. To thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory, thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

R 4

T H E

THE
Practice of Devotion.

OR,
 A TREATISE of
 DIVINE LOVE

Being the Continuation of the
 SECOND PART.

Of the Characters of Divine Love.

ALL the Moderns who have written of Morality, have mightily endeavour'd to give us the Characters of the Vertues and Passions. These Characters are a kind of Portraiture, which gives us lively Ideas of the Properties and Qualities of a Vertue, or the opposite Vice. Since it is so much our Interest to know this Divine Love where we are now Treating, after we have consider'd its Motives and Degrees, I think we cannot do better than consider its Characters which are its true Properties.

CHA

C H A P. I.

The First Character.

Of Love continu'd, or persevering.

There is nothing in this wicked World more rare than Continuance and Perseverance; every thing in it is always Changing, and in a Tempest of Revolutions. This is no ways surprizing in Bodies, which are made of Dust and Wind: But the Soul, the Image of the Deity, which ought to be firm, constant, and persevering in its Disposition, like God, who is its Creator, and whose Image it is, is the most changeable of all the creatures. It changes Sentiments, Actions, Opinions, Thoughts, Habits, Designs, Desires, Hopes and Fears, and for the most part always proceeds from White to Black. But the faithful Soul, being confirm'd by Grace, is constant and firm; 'tis a Rock plac'd in the middle of the Sea; the Winds and Storms beat against it on all sides; but it remains Victorious over all these Tempests. It seems, that Perseverance is not the peculiar Character of Divine Love, because no other Vertues can be call'd real Vertues, unless they be persevering. Nevertheless, there is a kind of Perseverance which is peculiar to Love. There is a perseverance of Habit, and a perseverance of Action. All solid and true Vertues have the perseverance of Habit; but not the perseverance of Action:

A perseverance of Habit, and a perseverance of Action.

'Tis

'Tis this last perseverance which is peculiar to Divine Love, and 'tis call'd *Continuity*, because Love is always in Exercise, and acting some way or other. And this is the greatest and most important Maxim in the Practice of Divine Love, *that we must never interrupt the Exercise and the Acts of it.* We cannot fall into this Interruption, unless our Conscience be in a bad State.

Dost thou not know, O faithful Soul, that God is thy Soul, and that his Love is the Sacred fire which enlivens thee, and gives thee the life of Grace? Thou canst not therefore cease to love God actually, without ceasing to Live. If thou should'st ask a Man who has a fervent Love for his Wife, or his Friend, and say unto him, Lovest thou this Woman, or this Friend? Could there be found one single Moment, wherein he would Answer thee; no, I do not love them at this Moment? On the contrary, he would tell thee, I love them always, and I am not one Moment without loving them.

A Devout Soul loves God a Thousand times more than the most beautiful of all the Creatures: And therefore there can never be found one Moment, or any State, wherein it can answer us, I Love not God actually at this Moment. We are always obliged to obey actually all the Commandments of God, but we are not always able to do it. We ought always to exercise Acts of Beneficence and Mercy towards my Neighbours; but in the Absence of this Neighbour, and sometimes the bad disposition of his Heart, and oftentimes my own Miseries, lay an invin-

cible

ble Obstacle in my way. But as to Divine Love, nothing can ever be an Obstacle to the Practice of it, and consequently it ought always to be practis'd, and to perform it's Acts.

In fine, 'Tis just to do to God, what God does to us. He loves us without interruption, his Love is only one Act of Love continu'd: He lov'd us from Eternity, by the decrees of his Election, He loves us in time, when he gives us Being, Motion, and Life. He loves us continually, when he preserves our Life by Food and Raiment. We do not breathe one single Moment, but it is an effect of his Love. But above all he loves us, when he calls us so tenderly and lovingly to himself: *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. 11. All ye that are a-thirst, come to the waters, buy Wine and Milk without Money, Esay 55. O my beloved, my Spouse, where dwellest thou, where art thou? Return, return, O Shulamite.* He loves us when he gives us a taste of those treasures, which makes the faithful Soul to say: *Thy love is better than Wine. My beloved is mine, and I am my beloved's. He led me into the Hall of feasting, and his Banner over me was Love.* In fine, O faithful Souls, find out one Moment wherein God does not actually love you, and I will allow you not to love God in that Moment. But altho' God should cease to love you sometimes, yet your Obligation to Love him would not cease; how much more reason then have you to Love him always, being always lov'd.

The Love of God to us is a continued Love; Our Love to God ought also to be so.

God

The Gift of the Heart ought not to be reiterated, but it ought to be confirm'd.

God demands of us our Heart, as a Gift. *My Son give me thy Heart.* This Gift ought to be presented at the moment of a good and solid Conversion. If thou hast presented the Gift, O faithful Soul, as thou oughtest to do 'tis no Trouble to do it a second time, I confess; but thou oughtest to confirm and renew it every Moment, by consecrating the Love of God, all the Sensations which may arise in the Heart. Thou did'st not give thy Heart to God, before he gave Grace to thee: But the Gift of his Grace is irrevocable; *For the gifts and callings of God are without Repentance. He is the Lord, he changeth not.* This eternal Goodness will not permit thee, to deprive God of that Heart which he hath taken to himself by his Grace. The Gift of the Heart is a Gift *irreiterable*, Grace is a Gift *irrevocable*. But as Grace which is a Gift irrevocable, suffers great Alterations; so the Gift of thy Heart to God is expos'd to great Temptations, which we must treat immediately.

The Practice of all Vertues makes the continuedness of Divine Love.

When we press the necessity of *Love continued*, we do not only intend to speak of the Habit. A learned Man, altho' he Sleeps, do any other Thing, retains always the Habit of his Learning, even when he does not Exercise it. A Saint has suffer'd, and does not suffer no more; he does not therefore cease to Exercise his Christian Patience, yet he preserves the Habit of it. 'Tis not in this Sense that we understand Love to be continued: our Meaning is, that the Acts and Exercises of Divine Love should not be interrupted. This will appear to you impossible, O

work

worldly Souls; How can we always Love, always think upon God, and do nothing else but Love Him? But let us remember, that Divine Love is a general Vertue, which diffuses itself through all the rest; which is not only the Spring, but the Soul and Form of other Vertues. Whatever is done without Faith and Love, is Sin, and every Action done in Faith, is an Action of Love. Be therefore assur'd, that the Acts of all the Christian Vertues, are so many Acts of Divine Love. When thou exercisest thy Patience in the midst of Afflictions, thou performest an Act of Love to God; for thou sufferest with a Spirit of Submission by his Appointment: 'Tis an act of Love in the *Person loving*, to submit out of Love, to the Will of the *Person loved*. Art thou in a state of Prosperity and Joy, thou givest Thanks, thou blest God for his Benefits, and so thou performest an act of Love: For to receive Favours from the *Person loving*, with a thankful Heart, is to Love him who gives them. When thou givest to the Poor, thou dost Works of Mercy: Dost thou not them, for the Love of God? These then are acts of Divine Love.

Thou mortifiest thy Lusts, thy Effeminacy, thy revengeful Spirit, &c. Dost thou not make these Sacrifices to thy God, and for the Love of thy God? Thou dost then exercise Love, thou performest the Acts of it.

But alas! will the devout Soul say, how many void Moments will be found upon this account, wherein I shall not find in me Divine Love? I Drink, I Eat, I busie myself
 Repose, Sleep and Relaxation of Mind are no Interruption to Divine Love.

in Affairs of this Life, and in the Works
 my Calling : In fine, I Sleep, Dream, I su-
 fer infinite Distractions, my Mind cannot a-
 ways be intent upon Heaven : These are
 the grand Interruptions to continu'd Love
 Comfort your selves, O ye Holy Souls,
 love God at the same time, when ye do not
 think of him. The Works of your Callin-
 are commanded you ; for God would have
 you to live by the Work of your Hand.
 Your Sleep, and your Repast are absolute-
 necessary for the preservation of your Life,
 which you ought to render to him, who gave
 it you ; you cannot love God without Living.
 And thus all the natural Helps which ye pro-
 cure for the continuation of your Life, serve
 also for the continuation of your Love. Your
 Distractions are not fruitless and without
 Love ; for a Soul cannot be always upon a
 stretch. But nevertheless, you do not cease
 to love God actually, if you take your Re-
 past, Repose, and the Refreshments neces-
 sary for the Preservation of Life and Health,
 with a prospect of being in a better Condi-
 tion to do Service to God, and to contribute
 to his Glory. Remember that excellent Rule
 of the Gospel, *Whether then ye eat or drink,*
whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in
name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God
the Father by him. This is a Morality
 known to the wise Pagans, who distinguish
 the Actions of Men into three Sorts, *Good,*
Bad, and Indifferent. The Morality of the
 Gospel knows no such Distinction : Accord-
 ing to it's Principles, there are no Works

1 Cor. 10. 32.
 Col. 3. 17.

indifferent; they may be such indeed, as to that which is call'd, the *Substance of the Work*. But Grace renders these Works Good, which are in themselves indifferent; all that is Sacrific'd to God, becomes *Holiness to the Lord*. If thou design'st all thy Works to the Glory of God, mediately or immediately, thou offerest all thy Life-long a perpetual Sacrifice to Divine Love.

Hitherto there is no Gap in the continuance of our Love; but yet there are many Gaps to be found in it; *Your sins have separated between you and your God*: These make the Gaps in the continuedness of your Love. I speak not here of Sins of Infirmary, which return every Day, without asking your leave. 'Tis true, that they hinder the Purity of Love; they imprint Stains in the Sight of God, upon the most shining Vertues. Let us keep ourselves from them, as much as is possible, that we may exercise the purest Love. But I speak of sensible Sins, which we know and feel, and for which our Conscience is troubled more or less, according as it is more or less Nice. Suffer not yourselves to be surpris'd by these false Doctors, who tell you, that a State of pure Love is not inconsistent with mortal Sins, *i. e.* that Darkness is not inconsistent with Light. Sins are acts of Hostility against God, *for we are Enemies of God by wicked Works*; and how can we exercise the Love of God, when we make War against Him? Sins are not only acts of Hostility, but of Hatred; and so in this sense, the Heart of worldly Men rebels against God. As to me, will a worldly Man say, do

Sins make great Gaps in the continuance of Divine Love.

I hate God, because I think to enrich myself by a fraudulent Traffick, because I dive my self with the Estate I have, and deny myself no Pleasure of Sense : But I take God Witness, that what I do is not out of hatred to him. Deceive not thy self, O thou Covetous, Ambitious, Voluptuous Man ; for all thy Actions must have some Principle : Either thou actest from a principle of Divine Love, or from a principle of Hatred to God, or from a principle of Contempt for God, and of Love to thyself above God. Thou findest not when thou actest from a principle of Love to God : No Man is such a Fool, as to say so ; thou wilt not confess, that it is from a principle of Hatred to God ; it must therefore be from a principle of Contempt for God, and preferring thyself before him. Now, know, that he who requires thy whole Heart, reckons this as a kind of Hatred : To practise Vertue otherwise than for God and his Glory, is to offend God, and to hate him.

Interested
Views interrupt
the continuity
of Love.

If you perform Moral Vertue upon humane Prospects, to please Men, or for your own Advantage, ye do not exercise Divine Love ; these are acts of Self-love. If ye take your Repast, if you do works of your Calling, for an Interest purely Carnal, ye do not Sacrifice any more to God. The Artificer works at his Trade, the Merchant, who pursues his Traffick, the learned Man, who Reads and Studies in a Closet, the Magistrate who manages publick Affairs, without having regard to the Interest of God, Love God any longer ; *i. e.* he does nothing up

the Prospect of making himself acceptable to God. The Merchant Trafficks that he may become Rich, the Statesman Labours to procure himself Credit and Authority: And here it is, O miserable Sinner, that thou wilt find great Gaps in the continuance of thy Love.

Where are those, who fill up the whole extent of their Duty in this respect? Covetousness, Ambition, Pleasure, are the first Springs of all Men's Motions. But know, that whereas the Glory of God, and the Design of doing all Things for him, has the Power of transforming all thy indifferent Actions into good Works; the want of this Love of God will transform all thy good Works into Crimes. I will conclude this Chapter with advertising those, who have their Hearts set upon Salvation, that these Interruptions, which are made to the Exercise of Divine Love, do it a Prejudice, which can hardly be express'd. When a Fire in a Chimney is suffer'd to go out, 'tis very hardly re-kindl'd. A Love interrupted, is a Love which is made sad, and a Love made Sad, withdraws when it has suffer'd long Interruptions, it is no more to be found. To re-kindle the Divine Love, when it is almost extinguish'd, we must pour out many Tears and Prayers; We must cast many looks upon the Sun of Righteousness, that we may obtain his Rays, to warm and quicken us: From these Interruptions proceeds our Coldness, Lukewarmness, Languishing, and Indifference.

S

Add

Divine Love
in Glory, is
the same with
that of Grace

Add to what has been said, this important Consideration, That the Divine Love of Glory, is absolutely the same with the Divine Love of Grace: For if Glory is Grace consummated, Grace is Glory begun. To the end therefore, that thy Love in Heaven may be the same with thy Divine Love on Earth, this latter must be continu'd with that in Heaven: And they will certainly join together, if thy Love on Earth is without Interruption; but if thy Love here below is interrupted, it will not unite with the Divine Love of Heaven; and so thou wilt be Undone to all Eternity. If thou leave a Gap between the Love of Grace, and the Love of Glory; who is it, that will fill this Gap, to join these two Loves? Nothing. And the Separation being Eternal, thy Love of Grace will remain useless, and will not lead thee to Glory.

A Prayer.

O My God! I am cover'd with Confusion, when I descend into my Breast, to discover there what Love I have for thee. I find there some sudden and changeable Love; a Love, which to Day is a burning Flame, and to Morrow, as cold as Ice. I love thee, and immediately after, I love thee not, I seek for myself in myself, I cannot find myself. I would Love thee constantly, and with an uniform Love, always burning and always brisk: But alas! I cannot do it with a Will so weak, that it cannot obtain the Victory over this unhappy weight.

lesh, which plunges me again every Moment into the Abyss of my own Emptiness. O my Sweetest and most Merciful Saviour, thou art the Object of my Love; but thou art also the Cause of it. To know thee should be sufficient to make me Love thee infinitely; since thy Beauties are infinite, and Beauty being known, does naturally produce Love: nevertheless I am fully convinc'd, that I do Love thee proportionably to the Knowledge I have of thee. O thou Source of Grace! O God, the Father of all Heat and Motion, Support me in the exercise of my Love, that I may Love thee without interruption, and without abatement upon Earth, I will love thee in Heaven. To thee be Honour, Love, and Glory, through all Ages. Amen.

CHAP. II.

*the Activity of DIVINE LOVE, and
it's Vigilance.*

The Second Character.

THE activity of Love is infinite and inconceivable, for intelligent Natures have a fund of Love and Hatred, which cannot be founded. Love is so Active, that the World, Pagan, and Christian Moralists, have found out nothing but Fire, whereby to represent its great Activity. Fire is the most active, not only of all the Elements, but

but of all Agents; which penetrates into all Things, which makes Passages where it finds none, which separates Things that are most closely united, which dissolves the hardest Things, which is never at Rest, and which ceases to Be and to Live, as soon as it ceases to Act. This is the most perfect Emblem of Love, which Man has imagin'd, or which the Holy Spirit has given us. 'Tis not only Human Love, to which this Activity belongs. The Heaven has it's Seraphims, which burn with Love, and the Church has seraphic Souls, which consume themselves in the Flames of Divine Love. This Divine Love, is of a great Activity, that it gives no respite to the Souls, who are inflam'd with it: The Seraphims never cease to cry, and say, *Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts.* The Souls which burn with these Flames of Divine Love, are always in Action; either they are contemplating and meditating upon the Goodness of God, or else they are exerted in Acts of Prayer, or else they are reading and reflecting upon the Mysteries of Faith, or else they are sighing after the Possession of a View of God, or else they are extending their Love, and the Effects of it to their Neighbour: Which Actions they produce from a Zeal enliven'd with Knowledge and Charity. They go from place to place, to conquer Souls to Jesus Christ, as the Apostles did. This Divine Love, with it's great Activity, acteth differently upon the outward Man, according to the Subject it meets with. If it meets with Rocky, hard and insensible Hearts; it calcines them, it softens

them, or breaks them in pieces: If it meets with wild Lusts, which rebel against the Will of God, it kills and Sacrifices them. At this Day, Divine Love will mortifie two degrees of Self-Love, and as much of Avarice and Ambition, and will never rest, till it has done it. This Celestial Fire will not stop, until it finds no more Employment and Aliment here Below, and then it will rejoin itself to it's Sphere, and return into God, who is it's Centre.

This being so, and being acknowledg'd by the World, 'tis not known whence it comes, nor where it is; 'tis believ'd to descend from the Clouds, when we hear devout persons speak; People who call themselves the great Masters of pure Love, who condemn all Activity in Divine Love: *No sollicitus Care*, they say, *no sensible Acts*, no uneasiness about the present State. *We must ask Grace for to morrow; for each Day brings its own Light.* We must not go forth to meet Grace, nor endeavour to prevent it; we must suffer it to come, and only co-operate with Grace, when it is present. The soul must be like a Bowl, perfectly round on a Plain perfectly Smooth; the Bowl does not give itself any Motion, it does not by any ways endeavour to move itself; but it is ready to be mov'd by the least Blast of Grace which comes to it, and touches it.

The Love of the Lord Jesus Christ to us, is it not the Pattern of our Love to God? How active was this Love of Jesus Christ? Did it cease one Moment to promote our welfare, both by Actions and Words? He went

The false Repose of pretended pure Love.

The Love of Jesus Christ to us was vigilant.

went from City to City, and from Desert to Desert, to invite People to come to him. He Preach'd, He wrought Miracles; in one place He multiply'd the Loaves, in another he rais'd the Dead, elsewhere he commanded the Sea and the Wind: And He never rested, until the Fire and Activity of His Love had carry'd Him up upon the Cross, laid Him in the Grave, and exalted Him to Heaven.

In the midst of His Agony He visited His Disciples, and found them asleep: He waken'd, and blam'd them, saying, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* Are we not always under Temptation, and in the Hands of Tempters, so long as we are encompass'd with this World, and have the Lusts of the Flesh in us? Is this the time to give ourselves up to an amorous Sleep? Ought we not rather to have a watchful Love, fearing that Jesus, the Object of our Love, should be taken from us? 'Tis not the time for us to Sleep, when the Devil is awake. 'Tis true, we must have an insupportable Suppleness to follow, with ease, the Blows of the Spirit of God, which bloweth where it listeth: But this is only acquir'd by Vigilance. Where the Soul is lull'd asleep in a false Repose, it loses this Suppleness, and acquires an unhappy weight; for the Suppleness of the Members is preserv'd only by Motion. *I was asleep, and heard the Voice of my well-loved, saying; open to me, my Sister, my Dove, my undefil'd; for my Head is anointed with Dew, and my Locks with drops of the Manna.* Cant. 5. 2. What does she answer to the

tender Invitations? *I put off my Coat, how can I put it on, says she, I have wash'd my feet, how can I defile them?* Such a refusal must cost many Tears to a Soul full of Love to it's celestial Spouse. *She rose at last, and she open'd to her Beloved; but her Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.* She run after him, but in Vain; she found him not. The Watchmen of the City found her in the Streets, while it was dark, they took her for a Debauch'd Person; they beat her and tore her Veil. Such is the activity and ardour of Divine Love, that it makes those, who are possess'd with it, break thro' all the Barriers of Decency. Honour forbids the Spouse to run after her Beloved in the Night-time; but Love prevails with her to do it.

To watch over our Heart and our Behaviour, will some say, is to renounce pure Love, 'tis to return to ourselves. If this be so, what will become of that famous Precept, *know thou thyself*, and the Commandment of St. Paul, *examine your selves, and prove your selves*? Is not this returning to God, to return to our own Hearts, to see if it be full of God, and empty of the Creature? And in case it be found full of the World, the World ought to be driven out of it, that we may render God the sole Master and Possessor of it. This is true Love.

The contemplative Men would banish from the Heart all sensible Love: No sensible Devotion, say they, no tenderness of Heart; no act proceeding from that which is call'd the Imagination. Nothing that is *affective*, as they speak, i. e. nothing that resembles

*Pudor reclam-
mat, at vincit
amor.*

Pure Love is
not an Enemy
to sensible
Actions.

resembles the Affections and Passions. All that belongs to this perfect Love, must be transacted in the upper and secret part of the Soul; they will not have the Machine of the Body to have any thing to do in it, nor to make any commotion of the Heart and Blood. There cannot be a more false Notion of true Piety. God, who made the Affections and Passions, did not he make them for himself? And does not he endeavour to withdraw them from the World, that they may be fix'd upon himself? Why should not our Imagination be allow'd to be concern'd in this Matter, that we may represent in it the Holy Ideas of God, his Excellency and Goodness, to awaken our Love? When the tenderness of the Heart, and the Motions of the Blood, lead us directly to God and his Love, why should we suppress them? God, who made the Body and Soul, and who is the principle of Corporeal Motions, as well as Spiritual Actions, will he detest his own Work? *Phineas* and *Elias*, whose Zeal produc'd such wonderful Commotions of the Blood, and who shed so much Human Blood in the just Indignation, were they ignorant of the Nature of true Love? Are the Tears of Penitents shed without great Commotions of the Blood and Spirits, and are they upon the account opposite to pure Love? In my Mind these pure Intellections, this Love where the Imagination must be no ways concern'd, are pure Visions. In a state of Grace we must think, and be sensible of what is done. Besides, we owe to our Neighbours acts of Love, which are sensible, not only to us,

to them: We owe them, I say, these sensible Acts for their Edification. There must be nothing of Ostentation in our Love, but neither must there be any Thing which we are ashamed to make appear. When we are told, shew us thy Love by thy Works, we must always be ready to obey what is requir'd of us, saying, behold, here are my Works, and the Proofs of my Love.

There is, no doubt, a certain Cessation from Action, which is join'd with true Divine Love; *Martha, Martha, thou carest for many things, but thy sister Mary hath chosen the better part.* This Text is abus'd by the contemplative Men, as if *Mary* had been fasten'd to the Mouth of the Lord Jesus by the Ears, and that this had oblig'd her to renounce the Practice of all good Works, both of Piety and Charity to her Neighbour. God forbid that we should have such a Thought of this Holy Woman! The Contemplation of *Mary* was not a mere passive Contemplation, it was not without Action. As the solicitous Care of *Martha* for the Service of Jesus Christ, was not without Contemplation, and without Reflections upon the great Obligations, which tied her to the Service of her Divine Lord. Jesus speaks for worldly Men; and he takes Occasion to do it from the Pious Cares of *Martha*; as from the Water of the Well of the *Samaritans*, he takes occasion to entertain his Disciples with a Discourse about the Heavenly Water of Grace; and from the Miraculous Bread, which the Multitude had eaten in the Desert, He takes occasion to speak of the Bread which came down from Heaven.

Heaven: Nevertheless the Water of the Samaritans, and the Bread made by Jesus Christ, were not bad; and so the Sollicitous Cares of *Martha* for the bodily Service of Jesus were Good, and ought not to be despis'd. The pretended heights of a contemplative Life, tend to stifle all the Actions of an active Life; *i. e.* to put a stop to the Progress of Good Works. O my Soul, this is a Snare which the Devil lays for Thee: Suffer not thy self to be surpriz'd by it, separate not those Things which God has join'd together. Contemplate thy God, as much as the Veil wherewith he covers himself, will permit thee; but never interrupt the course of Charity to thy Neighbour: For He, who says, that he loves God, and loveth not his Brother, is a Lyar.

The Cessation of Action, which agrees to true Divine Love, is a Cessation from all the dead Works of Sin; In this respect the Love of God is dead, He is crucify'd with Christ. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. I glory in the Cross of Christ, by which the World is crucified to me, and I to the World.* To the Holy Cessation of Action: joyn an Holy Cessation of Attention. Be no longer attentive to the deceitful and charming Voice of the World: it is a Syren which entices you to Precipice. Shut your Ears, and attend only to the Voice of your God. *This is the Exercise of pure Love.*

A Prayer.

O my God, thy Love in my Heart is not a watchful, but a sleeping Love: 'Tis buried in such a deep Sleep, that I call upon it in vain, it answers not, it gives no Signs of Life. How many times have I told thee, O miserable Jonas! who withdrawest thy self from the Presence of the Lord, thou sleepest in a Vessel toss'd with Storms, ready to suffer Shipwreck: Thou seest not that Sea-Monster the Leviathan, which opens his wide Mouth to swallow thee up. Awake thou who sleepest, and arise from the Dead, that the Lord may give thee Light by his Rays, and warm thee by his Love. O God, in vain do I solicit my Heart by such-like Exhortations, it sleeps notwithstanding; it opens it's Eyes sometimes, but weakly, and then presently it falls back again into it's Lethargick sleep. O Lord God, it belongs to Thee, to do this great Work, and to awake this Heart, this sleeping Love. The Voice of thy Grace is more powerful than the Voice of Thunder; let this Voice then speak, and say, O Lazarus, who sleepest a sleep unto Death, awake thou, come forth, and enjoy the Light of the Day. Throw behind thee thy Funeral-Cloaths, and thy Napkin: Come and awake thy Love for thy Jesus, embrace his Knees with a Divine transport of Love; and sing to him Eternally: To Jesus, who has lov'd us, and by his Love has made us Kings and Priests, to God his Father, be Honour and Glory through all Ages. So be it.

C H A P. III.

Of Jealous and Nice Love.

The Third Character of pure Love.

THE God, who is the Object of our Love, is a Jealous God, He gives himself this Title : *I am the Lord thy God, a God strong and jealous, who visit the iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the fourth Generation of those who hate me.* Who are those that hate God ? There are not perhaps any Men, who will confess themselves Guilty of this Crime. Idolaters themselves, who are meant in this Commandment, pretend to love God. They say, that they keep him painted in their Churches, and prostrate themselves before his Images, and before those of his Servants, *i. e.* of his Saints and Angels, out of Love to him, and because they would never lose the sight of him. But alas ! this Human Wisdom is Folly, when it forsakes the Letter of the Divine Commandments, to follow it's own Imaginations. Let them not deceive themselves in this Matter, for God carries his Jealousie even to the Wood and Stone : He swears by himself, and by that which is most Holy, that he will no way pardon the sharing of his Love and his Honour with Idols. *I am the living God, says the Lord, I will not give my Glory to another, nor my honour to graven Images.* From whence we conclude, that in every Church, where the

Divin

Divine Worship is divided between God and the Creatures, whether Living or Dead, there cannot naturally be any *pure Love*.

Let us not flatter our selves, O Christian Souls, as if the Jealousie of God were excited only by living Idols, which are the Works of God's Hands, and which are call'd Human Creatures: For he is Jealous of all his Creatures in general, when by our Worship we make them Idols; but he is Jealous also, and perhaps chiefly of the Idols we make, which we set up in our own Heart. St. Paul says, That *Covetousness is Idolatry*, Col. 3. Ambition, Pride, Wrath, Revenge, and all other Passions are no less Idolatries than Covetousness: And if God is Jealous of the Worship, which the Heart gives to Riches; He is also Jealous of the Honours we pay to vain Preferments, when we make them Idols. This concerns the niceness of the Love of God, which is in him, and by which he loves himself; For he loves himself, and ought to love himself infinitely: And this Love which he has for himself, cannot suffer us to give any Creature a part of his Honour and Worship. There is another Love of God; 'tis that which is in us, and which we have for God.

And this Love, by which we love God, which is that we now Treat of, has also it's Jealousie and Niceness; and this Jealousie is the Cause why this Sacred Love, when 'tis truly Master of our Heart, cannot endure any other Love, without suffering infinitely itself. This Matter seems to be exhausted in the Chapters, where we have Treated largely

largely enough of the inconsistency of Divine Love with the Love of the World, with Self-love, Self-interest, and all other Loves; and therefore here we can only gather some Gleanings after our full Harvest, which we shall do in three or four Reflections.

A Love Jealous and Content.

The first is, that there is a Love, *Jealous and Content*; and a Love jealous, but *discontented and grieved*. The Love Jealous and Content, is that which prevails over all other Loves, and is sensible of it's Victory. Divine Love in our Heart is always fighting with all other Loves: In those Moments when it receives sufficient Succours, and Auxiliary Forces to fight with success, it carries the Victory, and Congratulates itself upon it. It says with St. Paul, *None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself: I understand perfectly the emptiness of all the Creatures, and I despise them; they caress me, but I distrust them, and I look upon them as Traitors, who would strangle me with Cords of Gold and Silk: A Holy Soul is ravish'd to see it's own Heart, like a Field of Battle, cover'd all over with the Dead and Wounded; and Divine Love trampling under it's Feet, all the Passions it has overcome, and insulting over them in these Words: O Death where is thy Sting, O ye Passions, the Enemies of my Peace, ye have lost your Strength, ye are mortally wounded, I hold you in my Chains; Ye insolent Rivals, who dispute with me the possession of this Heart, which was made for mine only; ye are justly punished for your rashness. Get ye gone, ye Domestick Devils, leave my Soul at rest, and trouble my Tranquillity*

more with your Furies. O how happy is the Soul in this State, being possess'd by Divine Love, Jealous and Content: But how rare are such Souls upon Earth!

There is then another Divine Love much more common, and that is a Love *Jealous and Griev'd*. Our Heart is never without these two Loves, a Love of *Lust*, and a Love of *Charity*: The Love of Lust is an indefatigable Devil, which never yields; when the Love of Charity has beat it back, being assisted by Grace, it disappears, it seems to be destroy'd, it hides itself, and we Triumph for the Victory: And in those Moments of our Security, and the unhappy sleep of the Soul, this Devil being excited, inflam'd, press'd on by Examples and Objects, returns to the Fight, and carries the Day, by the assistance of Blood and Passion. But as soon as the Blood grows cool, and the Passion is allay'd, Conscience awakes; Divine Love being cover'd with Filth, and as I may say, pierc'd with the Wounds which it has receiv'd, falls into salutary Confusion: 'Tis asham'd that it has been forgotten, and suffer'd itself to submit to base Actions: It lifts up its Eyes to Heaven, and says to God, *My Father, I am not worthy to be called thy Son. Simon, Son of Joseph, lovest thou me?* Then it's God says to it, *Thou hast deny'd me thrice, O thou weak and miserable Love, which succumbest so often under the Love of Lusts; How shall I believe that thou are sincere?* Then my discontented Love will answer; *O my God, Thou knowest nevertheless that I love thee: Give me a victorious Love; and pardon my Infirmities and*

and my Falls, and hold me fast in thy Hand that I may not fall again. This is a Jealous Love, for there is a true Indignation against the Passions, those unhappy Rivals, who are continually attacking it to drive it out of the Breast. This is a Jealous sorrowful Love which sends forth sad Sighs, and which falls in a lamentable Tone, *I feel a Law in my Members warring against the Law of my Mind. I do what I would not, I consent to the Law of Love that it is good; I take pleasure in the Law, as to the Inner Man, but the Law of Lust which Reigns in my Members, hath taken me Prisoner, and made me its Slave. O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of this Death, from this Dead Body, which I carry in my Bosome, and which attacks me fiercely?*

Love Discontented takes the way of a dying Love.

My second Reflection is, That Divine Love being Discontented, imitates a Love driven away and Dying. At first, the Heart of a Believer has a lively and sorrowful Sense of the Victories of the Love of Lust; it wails them, it Groans for them, but unless it is Afflicted, this Wounded Love will become a Languishing Love. The Soul will return to its Sensual Pleasures, proportionably as it loseth those which are Spiritual; it will let its Divine Love languish, without taking much notice of its Misfortunes, and it will quickly suffer it to Die. Wherefore, a faithful Soul ought to solicit and assemble all its Vertues, that it may make Head against this wretched Rival of Divine Love. It ought to awake its Faith which is asleep, it ought to excite its Fear, and set before

its Eyes all the Pains design'd for those, who having tasted of the Heavenly Gift, happen to fall away, without rising again by Repentance: It ought in these strong Temptations to hold fast the unmoveable Anchor of the Hope of Glory. The Crimes of Idolaters, of Covetous, Ambitious, and other Worldly Men, with respect to Divine Love, are Breaches of the Soul's Vow, which dissolves the Conjugal Knot, and moves the Celestial Spouse to give the Soul a Bill of Divorce. Christian Souls, whose Vertue is firm, restrain themselves from giving to the Creatures this Love of Preference; but if they are Nice, as well as Jealous of their Purity, they ought not to suffer those Inclinations, which carry them too violently towards the creatures: They must have no favourable respect for Egypt, no tenderness for the World, no Complaisance for Lust; they must not look upon that as Innocent, which has a tendency to Sin, altho' the Sin be not sensible in it. A Soul truly Devout is upon Guard against the surprizes of Lust.

St. Paul tells us, *Grieve not the Holy Spirit, which you have been Seal'd to the day of Redemption.* And what else is the Seal of the Spirit, by which we are Seal'd, but that which the faithful Soul, the Spouse of Christ, speaks of, *He hath set me as a Seal upon his Arm, and his Banner over me was Love.* This is that Jealous Love which is Griev'd when it has a Rival; and when it is Griev'd, it retires and carries away with it all its Consolations, leaving us in Sadness and Darkeness. We are, the same Apostle, *the Temples of the Holy Spirit.*

What the Seal of the Spirit is, Eph. 5.

Cant.

T

Spirit.

Spirit : And we know how Jealous the Divinity is of the Purity of his Temples. This Divine Love is so nice, that if any Impurity be found in a Temple, in a Heart of Man, he quits it, and leaves the place to the Devil.

Divine Love
is not Jealous of other
Vertues, nor
of itself.

Our fifth and last Reflection is, That in avoiding one Rock we should not Split against another ; nor believe, that as the Contemplative Men say, That Divine Love is Jealous of other Vertues ; that the most Devout Souls can do nothing else but Love ; that Divine Love excludes the Love of Vertue ; that we ought not to Love Vertue, for its *Beauty* and *Goodness*, i. e. because it is Good and Beautiful in itself. This is to return to ourselves say they, still, to love the Love of God, instead of loving the Well-beloved himself. If we love Vertue and our own Love, it may be only because they are agreeable to the good Pleasure of God. These are the false societies of Love ; these are the Refinings which cannot be well Relish'd by wise Minds and Enlightned Consciences, who know that God by his Grace produces in us his Love to the end that we may love this Love ourselves : Not as it is our own Love, loving the Divine Love as our own Work, but by loving this Love, as it is the only way which can lead us to the Possession of God. How can God be Jealous of the Love which we have for his Love, since to love God, and to love his Love in ourselves, is the same thing.

A Prayer.

O My God ! The Reflections I have just now made, proceed from the Fountain-Head, for they are the History of my own Experiences. Thy Love in me, thanks to thy Goodness, is Victorious over other Loves ; but alas ! I dare not say, that its Victories are full and compleat. I love thee, O my sweet Saviour, but I am very sensible that I love other things much, and that the Degrees of Love which I have for the Creatures go too far. How often have I suffer'd myself to slip into Actions that are base and unbecoming me ? Thy Spirit dwelling in me is Jealous of these things, and grieved for them, and my Soul is often very Restless. O my God, direct my Thoughts, guide my Inclinations, so that not only the Bent of them may never be turn'd away from thee, but that I may never give any thing to the Creatures which may excite the Jealousy of my Creator. Thou art the Commander of Hearts, thou holdest them in thy Hand, as the Rivers of Waters ; suffer not mine to commit such Things, which will cover me with Confusion and fill me with Grief, when I return to myself. I do too often abandon myself to sinful Pleasures, and these Pleasures are attended with bitter Remorse : If my Love for thee were Jealous and Nice, as it ought to be, this would not happen ; for I should never suffer my Heart to rejoyce in any Creature, especially to Excess, and in an insolent manner. Come, therefore, O thou

Governour of the Universe, come and moderate my Sensibleness of all Objects which are not thyself. To thee, O my God, be Honour and Glory thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. IV.

Of Love that is sensible of the Interest of God.

The Fourth Character of *Divine Love.*

What is Zeal.

ZEAL is another Jealousy, which is no less Essential to Divine Love than the former. Jealousy is a Passion that is sensible above all that can be Express'd; the least Offences provoke it; and those which fall upon the Person Beloved, affect it more than those which concern the Person Loving. A Lover takes fire when the least attempt is made upon the Honour, Repose, or Life of the Person belov'd. A Soul that burns with the Love of God, is also infinitely sensible of all the Affronts which Men offer to God, and perhaps 'tis the most certain Character of Divine Love, and which is very seldom wanting. *I am Jealous over you with a Godly Jealousy,* said the Apostle to his Disciples *for I have espous'd you to one Husband, that I may present you as a Chaste Virgin to Christ.* The faithful Servants of God, have an Eye upon the Behaviour of those Souls which are Consecrated to him, and if any of them go astray from the Right way, their Bow

2 Cor. 11. 2.

are mov'd within them, and their Blood boils in their Veins. This Holy Jealousy, which is one of the principal Christian Vertues, is call'd *Zeal*: A Vertue which is certainly one of the Effects of Divine Love, and without which there is no true Christianity.

Zeal produces sometimes wonderful Effects. The Prophet *Elias* said, *I have been very Zealous for the Lord God of Hosts, because the Children of Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars, and slain thy Prophets with the Sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek Life to destroy it.* Such was the power of Jealousy in this great Saint, that it mov'd him to slay the Prophets of *Baal*; which he did not by any private Inspiration, as is commonly imagin'd, but in Obedience to the general Law of *Moses*, which had declar'd, That every Prophet, who endeavour'd to seduce the People, to serve other Gods, deserv'd to Die. *If there arise among you a Prophet, or a Dreamer of Dreams, &c. saying, let us go after other Gods, this Prophet shall be put to Death.* And also every private Person who talk'd of Revolting from God, and endeavour'd to seduce his People to Idolatry, was to put to Death: *Thou shalt not fail to put him to Death, tho' he were thy Brother, the Son of thy Father and thy Mother.* Add to this, that the Prophet *Elias* was Authorized by the presence of his Sovereign: *Ahab* was present, and did not oppose this severe piece of Justice. And this ought to be mark'd by the by, to show that the Action of *Elias* was not so irregular as may be imagin'd; nevertheless, it ought not now a-

A great Example of Holy Jealousy, in the Prophet *Elias*.

1 King 19. 14.

Deut. 13. 1, 2, 5.

Verse 6. 9.

days to be followed, when we live under a Dispensation full of Mildness and Mercy: And therefore this Example ought to be Moderated by that of the Lord Jesus Christ, who possess'd the Spirit of the Gospel. The Temple, the House of his Father, which was to be a House of Prayer, was prophan'd by a shameful Traffick; they made a Market of it: Now, he does not take the Sword in his Hand, but only a Whip, wherewith he drives away these Buyers and Sellers, and over-turns their Tables. Thus a wise Zeal, which spares Blood, ought not to spare the Idols and the Impious: It ought to drive 'em out of the Church, and from the Society of the Saints, and take all possible precautions to hinder them from corrupting the Civil Society.

Jealousy extends to all things.

Act. 17.

The Jealousy of the Friends of God is sensible of all the Affronts which are offer'd to God; which Affronts do either concern Religion or Manners. Religion is violated either in its Worship or Doctrine. When the Saints see the Children of Men run after Idols, the least which they can do is to be grieved for it, and to take notice of it. The Spirit of St. Paul when he sojourn'd at Athens was stirr'd in him, when he saw the City wholly given to Idolatry. He complains of them, he observes that they were not satisfied with Worshipping all the known Gods of Europe, Asia, Africk, and America, but had also built an Altar to the unknown God, which nevertheless gave him an occasion of Preaching to them Jesus Christ, a God who was unknown to them.

This

This great Apostle was as Jealous of the Doctrine as of the Worship. The *Galatians* were corrupted by the *Pharisees*; false Christians, who were zealous of the Law; who were very much for the Gospel of Christ, but still would have *Moses* retain'd, and the Legal Ceremonies. St. Paul reproves them upon this Occasion, and passes very grievous Censures upon them. He calls them, a foolish bewitch'd People; He accuses them of overturning the Gospel of Christ, of beginning in the Spirit, and ending in the Flesh, of turning away from God; of making void the Salvation of Jesus Christ by receiving Circumcision; of falling from Grace: In a Word, he treats them as People that are out of the way of Salvation. This Conduct of St. Paul informs us, how far we ought to carry our Jealousy for the Truths of the Gospel. We have wretched Heretics, who have subverted the Foundations of Religion; who deny to the Lord Jesus his Divinity, and to the Faithful, the Consolation of having in him a Redeemer, and a sufficient Sacrifice to expiate all our Sins. They make a God after the Image of Man, a God whom they deprive of his infinite Power, his boundless Knowledge, and his Omnipresence; a God of whom they have deprav'd all the Divine Attributes. Where is the Man who would think himself oblig'd, to look patiently upon these Wretches who should hack off the Nose, and pull out the Eyes of his Parents, and so disfigure all their Features? When I consider the Errors of the *Galatians*, and compare them with the Heresies of our Times, I find there is no

The Divine Love is Jealous of the Purity of Doctrine in Religion.

Comparison between them; and that these Errors of the *Galatians* do hardly deserve the name of Errors, they are so inconsiderable, in comparison of those detestable Opinions, of our times that are look'd upon as Tolerable. These *Galatians* believ'd in Jesus Christ the Eternal Son of God, who died for their Offences, and rose again for their Justification; they receiv'd him as the true *Messias*, God blessed for Ever, as him, by whose Name they pretended to be Sav'd. Nevertheless, they would load themselves with the Heavy Yoke of the Legal Ceremonies: Was this so great a Matter? Does this deserve all the *Anathema's* which St. Paul thunders out against them? Yes, without doubt, it did deserve them! Let us see then, what the declared Enemies of Jesus Christ and our Salvation may expect? Take heed that you be not catch'd in the Snare of a false Charity, but be Jealous with a godly Jealousy to preserve the purity of his Religion: Aspire after the Commendation which the Lord gives to the *Ephesians*; *I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and how thou canst not bear them which are Evil.*

Rev. 2. 2.

Love is Jealous against the Impunity of Sinners.

Since God is Jealous of his Holiness, as well as of his Truth, we ought to be as sensible of the dishonour done to God, by Vices and Immoralities, as of the Injuries done to Religion by Hereticks and Idolaters. The Heart of Just Lot was vexed within him, when he beheld the horrible Corruption of the People among whom he Liv'd: And if any thing sav'd Lot from the common Fire which reduc'd *Sodom* and *Gomorah* to Ashes,

it was without doubt his Holy Jealousy and his Concern for the Interest of God.

In fine, A Love Jealous of the Interests of God, ought to be lively affected with Indignation against the Persecutors of the Church, and of Jesus Christ: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* How can we see the Blood of the Faithful run down in great Streams, the Saints filling the Dungeons which are design'd for those who are the Pests of Mankind; the Members of Jesus Christ in the Gallies, under Chains, and upon the Benches design'd for wicked Wretches, without detesting both the blindness and cruelty of Men?

In all these respects, Men appear in a dreadful Insensibleness. Idolatry, Superstition and Heresy Reign in the World, and Triumph. The Persecutors who have still their Hands red and stain'd with the Blood of the Faithful, are nevertheless well receiv'd. The Impious and Indevout, which ought to be abhorr'd, are our Delight; their profanations pass for Railleries; we Laugh at that which ought to pierce our Hearts with Grief, and draw Tears from our Eyes. There is no sensibleness of the Interest of God, no jealousy for his Honour. Can there be any stronger Proofs that we do not Love God as we ought to Love him? Is there any thing which can speak more loudly our Ingratitude?

If God should neglect our Interests, as we neglect his, what would become of us? O miserable Flesh, thou imaginest that God is more sensible of thy Interests, than thou art of his, because he abandons thee to the Rage

Jealous Love
is angry with
Persecutors.

God does not
neglect our
Interest, as
we think he
does.

Rage of Persecutors. But dost thou know that what thou callest thy Interests, are the Interests of God? Thy Goods, thy Houses, thy Wife, Children, and thy Country are Ravish'd from thee by Persecutors: But do not these Goods belong more to God than to thee? Are not thy Children the Children of God? Besides this, are not the Sanctuaries of God overthrown? Are not the Idols of Jealousy set up everywhere? Are not his Truths Oppos'd and Blasphem'd? Are not the Lights which God hath set up, Extinguished? These are the Interests of God. And because God suffers all this, shall we conclude, that God neglects and abandons his own Interest? No, no; God does only wink at these things for a time: Let us not then believe, that he neglects our Interest because he delays to take Vengeance; he will take care of our Honour, as well as of his own Glory. And since he thinks fit to be patient with his own Enemies for a time, will it be just in us to be Offended, because he bears with ours? God knows much better our true Interests than we ourselves. Thou art deceived, O faithful Soul, when thou thinkest that it is thy Interest to be always happy upon Earth: A wise Pagan said, *That there is no Man more unhappy, than he who is always happy.* God loves thee still, when he abandons thee to thine Enemies.

But tho' it were true, That God were not sensible of thy Interest, would'st thou be oblig'd to be sensible of his? Thou owest nothing to God, God owes nothing to thee: God was not made for the glory of Man, but Man for the glory of God.

A Prayer.

THE more I search, the more I find,
That the extent of my Duty to thee,
my God, is great, and the more I disco-
ver, that I am still very far from the Practice
of these Duties. I owe thee all, and I pay thee
nothing; there is scarce any Interest of
which Men are less sensible than of thine.
He is powerful enough, say the Impious, to
manage his own Affairs, and give them such
success as he pleases. It belongs to God, if
there be one, to concern himself in the Af-
fairs of Men; and it does not belong to
Man, to meddle with the Affairs of God. O
ungrateful Vine, which God has Planted in a
good Soil, and water'd with Rain from Hea-
ven; is it well-done of thee to be Unfruit-
ful, and to render him none but Sowre
Shapes in stead of those that are Good? O
backbiting Servant, thou desirest to receive Ten
Talents from thy Master, and thou wilt not
render him one Farthing Interest. If thou con-
sistest to do so, the Master of the Vine will
pronounce thy Sentence, and say, Pluck up
this ungrateful Vine, this Fig-tree which
beareth nothing but Leaves, and throw them
into the Fire which shall never be Quench'd.
my God, cease not to Cultivate me, altho'
I am Unfruitful; have Patience yet for some
time; continue to Cultivate me; make me
receive the benign influences of thy Grace;
raise me up into thy calm Air; cleanse every
inch in me which beareth not Fruit: Let
my Soul be like a Tree Planted by the Rivers
of

of Waters, which bringeth forth Fruit in its Season, that so when thou shalt remove me from this strange Land, I may be bound up in the bundle of Life. To thee, O my God, be eternal Glory and Praise, through all Ages. *Amen.*

CHAP. V.

Divine Love loves Silence.

The Fifth Character of Divine Love

WE meet with nothing more often in the Works of false Devoto's, than Exhortations to Silence, and Directions about Silence, which are very necessary according to them for the exercise of pure Love. They love these Terms, an *Amorous Silence*; but the greatest part of the Idea's are False, Extravagant, Superstitious, Hypocritical, Exalted by a false Elevation and do not at all fit us. Let us Reason the more intelligibly and like Men, of the Silence of Divine Love, which we have laid down as one of its Characters. 'Tis very certain, that there is an inward Silence, hundred times more useful and more excellent than that which is External, to which nevertheless great Praises are given, and justly enough, for nothing more dissipates the Soul than abundance of Vain Words. *O Isles keep silence, the Lord is in his holy Temple let all the Earth hold their peace and keep silence*

Habbak.

beca

because of his presence. A Man cannot place himself in the presence of God, on purpose to love him, with all the Dispositions which the sight of so great a Majesty requires, without falling into this Sacred Silence. There are several sorts of it.

First, There is a silence of Admiration. The Silence O faithful Soul, when thou placest thyself of Admiration before God to love him, thou oughtest to see him as he is, *i. e.* cloath'd with Splendor and Glory, *dwelling in Light inaccessible*, encompass'd with Thousands of Millions of Angels, Archangels, and Seraphims, who are continually prostrate at his Feet, kissing the Ground, throwing their Crowns before him, making the Heavenly Arches to resound with *Allelujah* and Sacred Songs; waiting upon his Orders, dispos'd to a ready Obedience, walking or fleeing at his Word to execute his Commands: For *he maketh his Angels Spirits, and his Ministers a flame of Fire.* Thou also oughtest to see him seated upon a Throne of Fire and Light, from whence proceed Rays so piercing, that no Human Creature is able to endure the splendor of them. And from hence proceeds the Proverb which was so common in *Israel*, *We shall see, for we have seen God.* 'Tis very true, That Divine Love being always joyn'd with reverence, ought to form this Idea, and place it before the Eyes of the Devout Soul: And 'tis certain also, that a Soul, being full of Faith and Love to God, cannot adhere as it ought, to this Object, without falling into a Religious Silence. The Majesty of a being astonishes us, and strikes us Dumb, and what

what is the Majesty of a King? It is not much as the least Ray of Divine Glory. Art thou, O Worm of Earth, who creest in the Dust, look upon the *King of Kings* without being sensibly touch'd to the bottom of thy Heart?

A silence of
Terror.

There is another Silence which comes next to this, and is caus'd, not so much by Admiration, as by Terror. When a Soul sees God, encompass'd with the Ministers of Vengeance, Fire, Thunder and Lightning those terrible Scourges, 'tis affrighted, as the *Israelites* were in the Desert; who said, after they had heard God speaking in the midst of the Flames, *Let not the Lord speak to any more, lest we die. O how fearful a thing is to fall into the hands of the Living God! The Lord our God is a consuming Fire.* *Moses* himself, who was so much accusom'd to converse with God, and who spoke to him as one Friend speaks to another, could not forbear to tremble and cry out, *I am afraid and tremble.* The Reprobate cannot endure the sight, and therefore they cry out, and say to the Mountains, *fall on us, and cover us from the face of him that sits upon the Throne, and from the face of the Lamb.* The Lord my God is a God that hides himself. He hath put a Veil over his Face for a time, as *Moses* did over his; and therefore Worldly Men do not see him in that dreadful Equipage. But Souls enlightn'd by Faith see him at all times, at least in part, and sufficiently to make them say unto him, *O Lord, thou who art terrible in all that thou dost.* Now, 'tis impossible to consider God after this manner without

without falling upon our Face, and remain- A silence of
ing in a Religious Silence. 'Tis true, this is Reverence.
not properly the *Amorous Silence*, but it leads
to it, and when Lust talks too high, when
the Passions are very Boisterous, and lose the
Reverence that is due to the Divine Majesty,
it is good to draw aside the Veil before them,
that they may be frightened by beholding the
Divine Glory quite Naked, and keep Silence,
during which time a Soul truly affected with
the Love of God, returns to its *Amorous*
Silence, full of Reverence, Humility and
Zeal.

Human Passions are noisy, and therefore
it is commonly said, that great Passions are
mute, but the little Passions speak much.
Foolish Love pours out a Thousand Vain
Discourses; but Solid Love, which has for
its Object true Merit, and the Vertue of the
person Belov'd, is always Respectful, and
consequently keeps Silence, and never speaks
but with Weight and Measure. Such is Di-
vine Love, it is truly affected with the Beau-
ties and Excellencies of God, and loses it-
self in the Contemplation of the Divine Per-
fections: This is employment enough for it,
and 'tis not necessary that it should be em-
ploy'd in speaking. Nevertheless it speaks
when its Duty and the Interest of God, who
is the Object of its Desire, require it; this
Love will speak when 'tis Provok'd, and sees
the God whom it Adores and Admires, Af-
fronted, Despis'd, Blasphem'd, Offended;
say, it will speak with a Holy Transport
upon these Occasions, it will break and over-
turn the Tables of the Money-Changers, who
prophane

prophane the Temple: It will Treat Hypocritical Sinners as whited Walls and painted Sepulchres; it will slay the Prophets of Baal and thrust thro' the Moabitish Woman with the false *Israelite*. This love will speak when the Soul being oppres'd with the Motions of Acknowledgment for great Favours bursts forth into Thanksgivings; or when the Conscience being Wounded turns and consumes it. Then it says, *Is not thy Word within me like Fire, until I speak with my Tongue. I held my peace, said the Prophet, even from good Words; but my Heart was hot within me and whilst I was musing the Fire kindled; then I spake with my Tongue.* This Divine Love therefore is not always Mute, but is always respectful and Wise.

Psal. 39.

The silence
of Submission
and Obedi-
ence.

The silence
of the Pas-
sions.

There is a silence of Submission and Obedience, which makes the Saints to say in their great Tribulations, *I held my peace, and open'd not my Mouth, because thou didst it:* 'Tis doubtless Divine Love, which imposes this Silence; yet we shall say nothing of it here but conclude with the Silence of the Passions.

Here, O Devout Souls, is the true *Amorous Silence*, i. e. that which Love Commands, and without which it cannot exercise its Acts. Who can express how noisy the Passions are? I speak not here of the Storms which they excite without, for there are the tempestuous Winds, the Whirlwinds which overturn Sea and Land, and carry Terror and Confusion into all Places. I speak of the Commotions which they excite in our own Bowels, and the Agitations which they make themselves Masters of our

Heart

Hearts; there they speak aloud and like Sovereigns. Each Passion comes in Order, and would be heard in its turn, that it may be Obey'd: One commands Pleasures, another commands Blood to be Shed, a Third enjoyns those ways which are to be Chosen, that we may become Great and Rich: And in this confus'd Tumult, God alone is he who is not heard, and therefore Divine Love ought to impose Silence in these Confusions and Transports.

And this is necessary, first, That God may be heard. How should he be heard in a Soul full of the confus'd and insolent Voices of the Passions, when he speaks to our Heart only by the mild Inspirations and gentle Motions of his Love? How, say I, should he be heard, since he is not heard when he makes his Thunder Roar? *The Lord is in the small and still Voice.* But that ye may hear the sound of that Voice, full of Grace and Love, ye must have a compos'd Heart, and impose silence upon Ambition, Covetousness, Self-love, the Love of the World, the Passion of Revenge, and upon Anger: Let us say as was said with *Samuel*, *Let the Lord speak, for his servant hears.* When God teaches thee thy duty in the Closet of thy Heart, banish from thence the Passions, impose silence upon them, and lend an Ear to nothing but the Voice of thy God.

This silence is no less necessary, when thou should'st speak to God in Prayer; for God will not hear a Prayer when thy Voice at the same time is mingled with the Voice of Carnal Lusts. Speak alone, O my Soul, if thou
U
would'st

would'st have God to be attentive to thy Words: Whence come these unhappy Distractions in Prayer, which are the great trouble of Devout Souls? They are the Passions which speak to thee, and thou hearest them; they come and pull thee by the Ear; they seize upon thee, and call thee back to the World, even at those Moments wherein thou renouncest the World: And the cause of all this is, That thou hast not yet known the Virtue and Efficacy of Divine Love. We have shown, that Respect, Terror, and Admiration render us attentive; but Love does quite other Things.

A Lover is made attentive by the Tongue of his Mistress, tho' she says nothing but what is common; he admires all her Words and looks upon them as Oracles; when he speaks to her he will not suffer any Distraction of Mind, but will think only upon her and what he has a mind to say to her; he scrupulously chuses all the Expressions that are most proper to persuade her, and most capable of representing to her the greatness of his Passion. O ye faithful Souls, if ye love God, as much as this miserable Man loves the World, ye would not be distracted in your Prayers; but ye hearken to the Voice of the Enchanter, ye are more attentive to the Language of the Passions, than to the Voice of God.

Hold your Peace, ye importunate and insatiable Passions: Hold your Peace, because I am in the Lord, in whose Presence I am; leave me in the Bosom of Him, who loves my Soul. Be gone, ye ambitious Projects, ye Self-in-

rest

rested desires, ye cruel Passions, ye soft Pleasures; get ye gone, and leave me to enjoy peaceably the Object of my Love. O ye Daughters of Jerusalem, or rather ye Daughters of Babylon, I conjure you, that ye stir not up, nor awake my Love until he pleases.

A Prayer.

ALAS, O my God, in vain do I command my Passions to keep Silence, I am not obey'd, it belongs Thee, O my God, to command them; to thee I say, who spakest and it was done, who commandedst and it stood fast: To thee, who makest thy Voice to be heard by the deep Abysses of Nothing; to thee, who speakest to the Sea, the most Deaf and cruel of all the Elements; to thee, who makest the cruel Lions obey thee, and stoppest their Mouths. Impose therefore Silence upon my extravagant Passions: Put a stop to the sudden Commotions of these Furioso's, who tear my Raiments in pieces; receive my Prayers into the bosom of thy Love; let the vain Images of the World, and the cruel Vultures of my Remorse no longer come to torment me. Blow, O thou gentle and calm Breeze, O thou South-Wind, blow into my Garden. Thou passest by like a stormy Wind, which breaks in Pieces the Rocks, thou passest by like a Fire, which consumes the Forests; the hand of the Persecutor, who lays the Church desolate, is the Rod of thy Fury. O God, let what is past suffice; O thou Sword of the Lord, return into thy Sheath, and come forth any more, but to consume those who lay my Heritage Desolate.

C H A P. VI.

Divine Love loves Solitude.

The Sixth Character.

Solitude and Silence are very closely united.

Solitude is necessary to the Practice of Divine Love.

Cant. cap. 3.

Solitude and Silence are so closely united, that 'tis difficult to conceive and practise one without the other; upon which account the Doctors of Morality, who press so much the necessity of Silence, do no less Preach up the necessity of Solitude, for the Exercise of Divine Love. But since their Maxims do not agree with ours, we shall make no use of them; but we shall follow the Maxims of Faith, Reason, and the true Saints; nevertheless we shall take from them what is capable of a good Sense, and strip it of their Mystical jargon.

Solitude is doubtless absolutely Necessary to the Practice of Divine Love. Worldly Men seek after this Solitude in the Exercise of their foolish Loves; Shame and Confusion obliges them hide the Impurity of their Actions: But Divine Love requires it, to the end that nothing may distract the Devout Soul in it's Holy, Pure, Chast, and Spiritual Embraces. Otherwise, it is so far from being ashamed of them, that it accounts them an Honour: *Let him kiss me*, says the Sou enamour'd of Jesus, *let him kiss me with the kisses of his Mouth; let his Left Hand be under my Head, and his Right embrace me. I found him who loves my Soul, I held him, and would not let him*

go, until I brought him into my Mother's House,
and into the Chamber of her who conceiv'd me. O
Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you, that ye
stir not up, nor awake my Love, till he please.
The amorous Soul makes no Mystery of it's
Love, it entertains it's Companions with it,
it speaks of it to all the World; which is a
good Proof of the Purity and Chastity of it's
Love: For impure Passions conceal them-
selves, as much as is possible, from the Know-
ledge of Men; but the pure Flames of Divine
Love desire to make *their light so shine before*
Men, that their Heavenly Father may be
glorify'd by it.

Nevertheless, 'tis true, that the Exercise of this Sacred Love, requires Solitude as well as Silence. There are certain acts of Divine Love, which cannot be exercis'd in secret; for we have formerly concluded, that a Life which is Regular, is entirely Consecrated to the Love of God, even those Actions of it, which are most ordinary and different: And the Acts of Charity towards our Neighbour, which are Acts commanded and produced by Divine Love, are almost all visible Actions which are necessary to be brought out of Solitude, and often in the Presence of Witnesses. But what we call the direct and formal acts of Love, cannot well be done, but in a Solitude, either External or Internal. Love is the Action of the Heart, and in this Action the Heart would not be distracted. That we may exercise this Love, God requires, with Judgment and Knowledge, we must Contemplate, Reflect, and think upon the Excellencies, Beauties, and

The Exercise of Love requires Solitude.

Goodness of God: Now, Retirement and Solitude are necessarie to Contemplation. It must be confess'd, that if Solitude is necessary to exercise the acts of Love, 'tis also necessary to relish the Pleasures of it: For God does not joyn to the Soul in such an intimate and amorous Union, as gives Consolation to the Faithful, but when it is disengag'd from the vain Idea's of the World. But there are several sorts of Solitude.

Of the Solitude of the Desert and Cloyster.

There is a Solitude of the Desert, and of the Closet. 'Tis doubtful, whether the Solitude of the Desert be of so great use for the Practice of Divine Love, as some of the Ancients imagin'd. If in the Desert, a Man is secur'd from the Persecution of those Objects, which are Enemies of Divine Love; 'tis certain also, that he is then depriv'd of the Benefit of those Succours which are not useless to Love. The Solitude of the Cloyster is not so pure as may be believ'd; whatever good Intentions the Founders of a Monastic Life might have, they are very much deceiv'd in their Hopes. These places of Retirement which seem to be out of the World, are nevertheless full of the World; the Flames of impure Love burn there much more than those of Divine Love, and in these places 'tis scarce known what is the Silence of the Passions; for they are there more noisy and insolent than elsewhere. Thus we believe that the Solitude of the Closet is preferable to the Solitudes of the Cloyster and Desert.

Of Solitude of a long Duration.

We must also distinguish between a Solitude of a long continuance, and a Solitude which lasts but a little while, but to which

we often return. The Solitudes of a long continuance are difficult to be endur'd; neither can we easily give Credit to those Contemplative Men, who tell us of their State of Contemplation, Active and Passive, as a fixt permanent State, and out of which they never stir. This is Hypocrisie; these People talk what they do not think; the Soul has it's Relaxations, and ought to have them. If a Man runs always, he can run but slowly; but if he stop at certain times, by this means he gathers Strength, and makes great Progress in his Course. Sometimes the Imagination is so deprav'd, in these long Solitudes, that it thinks it feels the Divine Consolations of Divine Love, and yet all this is nothing but the Delusions and Fancies of the Spirit of Pride.

Let us also distinguish in long Solitudes, between those which are Voluntary, and those which are Involuntary. When we search the History of the Prophets and Apostles, and even of the Saints of the Primitive Church, we find not there any certain Proofs or Examples, that God ever honour'd these long Voluntary Solitudes with his peculiar Favours; there are Proofs enough to be found in the Legends, but our Age is too incredulous to believe these Proofs.

The case is not the same in those involuntary Solitudes, which the Providence of God imposes upon Confessors and Martyrs, for the Glory of his Truth; I call these Solitudes involuntary, not that they are constrain'd, for on the contrary, the Saints in this case make a Sacrifice of their own Will; but they

Of involuntary Solitudes.

are involuntary, because the Will does not choose them. Now these Solitudes are the Sources of Consolation; God, who by his Holy Will imposes these Sufferings upon the Saints, does it by an amorous Dispensation: For 'tis of these Holy Martyrs, that St. Paul says, God afflicts and chastens all those whom he loves; his Love which calls them out to these severe Tryals, furnishes them in that State with all the Spiritual Consolations, that can feed and increase the Flames of Divine Love. If these sweet and charming Contemplations, that are full of Divine Love, whereof we are now speaking, are to be found any-where, 'tis certainly in Prisons. These happy Confessors being shut up in black and dark Dungeons, are never weary there, nor lose their Patience: And 'tis certain, according to the Testimony of those who have endur'd them, That God there imparts to them unspeakable and glorious Joys; but these Faithful Souls are not confin'd within common Rules. And therefore those who rejoyce under Tortures and Strappadoes, in Fires and Torments, invented by Devils and Tyrants, why should they not be full of Joy, in the Darknes of a Dungeon? But these Favours are not the ordinary course of Grace: Not that we would deny them to be Saints upon all Occasions, and especially at the time of Death; There is not a devout Soul, whom God does not carry thro' these flourishing and odoriferous Gardens, before he takes them up into the true Garden of *Eden*, the Eternal Paradise. In the meantime we will never believe, that these Contemplative

contemplative Men can, whenever they please, procure themselves the Enjoyment of these singular Favours of our Divine Spouse.

Hitherto our Reflexions have been employ'd only upon External Solitude: But there is another Solitude which is call'd Internal, which some have very well defin'd, by forgetting all the Creatures, by withdrawing from them, and depriving them of all our Affections and Thoughts, of all our Desires, and of our own Will. Provided this Definition be not spoil'd by a false Gloss, it may pass for Excellent, for 'tis true, that this internal Solitude, which is absolutely necessary to the Practice of Divine Love, is an entire withdrawing from all the Creatures. O faithful Soul, when thou hast driven out of thy Temple the World, the flesh, and all the Cares of this Life, thou may'st then boast that thou art alone with the Deity, and thou mayest adore him in Silence, with a pure and ardent Love, which is the true Evangelical Worship: For, *God is a Spirit, and those who worship him, ought to worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* Let us borrow without Scruple from a bad Author, these fine Words following, which are so proper to give us a Taste of that Holy and amorous internal Solitude. *The true Solitude is that wherein the Soul reposes itself, in a profound and amorous Calm, between the Arms of its heavenly Father, the Author of all Good Things: at a vast, profound, and immense distance, at infinite Spaces are there, between a Soul that arriv'd at this Divine Solitude, and the rest of Creatures? 'tis in these spiritual Deserts that it converses with the Soul, and Communicates* him-

Of internal Solitude; it's Excellency.

Molino's guide Spirit, B. 3. c. 12.

himself Internally to it, 'tis there that he fills it, because it is empty; 'tis there that he Cloaths it, with Light and Love, because it is naked; 'tis there, that he Exalts it, because it is poor in it's own Esteem: 'Tis there, that he unites himself to it, or transforms it into himself, because he finds it alone. O amiable Solitude, the unity of Eternal Blessings, the Mirrour wherein we continually contemplate the Eternal Father: 'Tis for very good Reasons, that thou art call'd Solitude, since thou art so alone, that there is scarce a Soul who knows thee, loves and seeks after thee, &c. The most High has his secret Habitation in this Holy Solitude: The Paradise wherein we enjoy the Conversation of God, is to be found in the middle of this Desert; and in this internal Retirement, his Efficacious, Miraculous, and Divine Voice, &c. Go on then, O Christian Soul, go on, without amusing thyself, towards this happy Solitude. God calls you, why do you not return to your Centre, where he will renew you, change, fill, and Cloath you; and shew you a new and heavenly Kingdom, full of Chearfulness and Joy, of Peace and Tranquillity?

Perhaps, this is nothing worth, in the Sense, and according to the Views of the Author; but a very good use may be made of it, in the Sense of the Church. 'Tis certain, that this Internal Solitude, this empty Space, and this Oblivion of all the Creatures, is the natural Effect of Piety and true Love. This Internal Solitude is that which has procur'd, and which still procures every Day, so many Pleasures to the Confessors and Martyrs of Jesus Christ, in their External and involuntary Solitude, and in the
darkness

darkness of their Dungeons. How many miserable Wretches are there, whose Soul is more fill'd with Horror, than their Dungeons are with Darkness? And this happens, because they are not in any Internal Solitude, they have not forgot the World, and their sinful Habits follow them into their Prisons. But these Saints, whom we mention'd before, and of whom we have Examples, have emptied their Hearts and Souls of the Creatures: And God finding the Place empty, fills it; and his Presence being invited by a Holy Love, renders Love for Love, and makes the Holy Souls sensible of *those Joys, which pass all Understanding, which Eye has not seen, nor Ear heard, neither has it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive.*

If the Devout Soul, without the help of External Involuntary Solitudes should find Means, to strip and empty itself of the Creatures, then it would be capable of feeling also some Rays of that Joy, full of Love and Consolation: Upon which account the Darkness and Solitude of the Night, are more commonly favour'd than the Retirement in the Day-time, and of the Closet. The External Senses being quite disengag'd from their Objects, leave the Soul at liberty to turn towards God, to have vehement breathings of Love, and to receive Holy Favours.

'Tis unhappy both for us and Divine Love, that we are never alone in our own Breast. From one Quarter comes Ambition with it's Pumps, the Devil presents himself with his imaginary Kingdoms, and says, *I will give thee*

thee all these, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. By another Gate, Voluptuousness comes in with all it's Equipage of Pleasures. At another time our internal Solitude is interrupted, by the black Furies like so many Serpents, who entice us to revenge. Happy, and thrice Happy are we, when we can drive away these vain Apparitions, which interrupt our Solitude !

This is that internal Solitude which the Morality of the Gospel calls Recollection. We cannot sufficiently complain of that sad Distraction which our Soul endures, being encompass'd, overwhelm'd, and persecuted by worldly Objects, by it's own Affairs, it's Employments, Pleasures and Diversions ; by which Means it is torn into a hundred Pieces. The Winds of Passions carry it's Vessel sometimes to the East, and sometimes to the West ; to the Bags of Gold and Silver, the Company of Women, and the Pleasures of a Debauche : And what way is there to live and escape, in the midst of so many Mortal Wounds, which the Soul receives in these Courses and Wandrings out of the right Way ? There are no other Means left, but to recal it to it's God, it's Centre, the Object of it's Love, and the great Principle of it's Happiness. When we press Men to recollect themselves, to return into themselves, that they may be fix'd upon God only, they hear us not, they understand us not, and believe, that all we say to them, are only the Visions of a Crazy Brain.

A

A Prayer ;

For begging of God, that he himself would recal the wandring and distracted Souls.

O my God, thou knowest me, better than I know myself: How far the dissipation of my Soul will proceed, which Lust scatters among an infinite number of vain Objects. These vain Objects fill my Heart ; and when I return into my own Breast, thinking to find myself in a Holy Solitude, I find within me a troublesome Crowd of vain Desires and foolish Thoughts ; so far am I from being empty of the World. Thou alone, O my Saviour, thou alone canst drive away these Buyers and Sellers out of thy Temple, take therefore the Whip of Cords, overturn the Table of Avarice, Ambition, and Voluptuousness : 'Tis no matter what Sorrow it Costs me, I will not murmur, I will not say, by what Authority dost thou these Things ? For I know thou hast a full Power over me, and over all that is in me. When thou shalt procure me this Holy Solitude, being all alone with my Soul, thou wilt speak to it, according to it's own Heart ; thou wilt give it both Proofs and sweet Effects of thy Divine Love, because it is thy Chast Spouse. To thee, O my Saviour and my God, be Empire, Honour, and Strength, through all Ages. Amen.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Of Sighing-Love, or the Sighs of DIVINE
LOVE.

The Seventh Character.

Sighs are inseparable from all Love.

SINCE we are enquiring after the Characters of Divine Love, 'tis impossible to omit Sighs, which seem to be inseparable from all Love upon Earth. And this Character is Divinely express'd in the eighth Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, which is an excellent Abridgement of the Gospel.

Rom. 8. 19, & 23.

The third Order of Sighers.

St. *Paul* having describ'd the Admirable Effects of the Spirit of God, which dwells in us, which quickens us, which makes us free from the Law of Death, which becomes in us Life and Peace, which mortifies the Deeds of the Body, and destroys the Lusts of the Flesh, which Cries in our Hearts, *Abba Father*, which gives Testimony with our Spirit, that we are the Children God: After all this, I say, the Apostle enters upon the matter of Sighs, and says, First: *That all the Creatures Sigh together, waiting for the Revelation of the Glory of the Sons of God. And not only they, but ourselves also, who have receiv'd the first-Fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, and the Redemption of our Bodies. And lastly, the Holy Apostle adds, That the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities: For we know not what to pray for, as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with Sighs unspeakable, or Groans that cannot be utter'd.*

Here

Here are Three Ranks of Sighers. The first is, The Body, and *the Collection of all the Creatures, who groan and travail in Pain together until now.* The second is, the Body of the Saints, who have receiv'd the first-Fruits of the Spirit; *they sigh, waiting for the Adoption.* Lastly, the Holy Spirit of God himself sighs in us, and makes Intercession for us, *which Sighs or Groans that cannot be utter'd.* This Spirit is the Spirit of Love; and all these Sighs proceed either far or near, from the Love of God.

Why are the Creatures, which for the most part are insensible and incapable of Love and Hatred, represented to us as Sighing after Deliverance, and expecting the Glory of the Children of God? They are subject to Vanity, but 'tis with respect to us. We see in all the Creatures Marks of the Wrath of God, and of his Curse against us: The fields are become Unfruitful, the Plants are without Fruit; the Heavens without Dew, become as Brass over our Heads, and the Earth, by the Curse pronounced against it, becomes as Iron under our Feet. But if we look only upon the Heavens and the Earth in themselves, they are as well in that State wherein we see them, as in another: They contribute no less to the Glory of their Creator, by becoming the Instruments of his Justice, than they would do, if they were only the Instruments of his Bounty. 'Tis therefore our Curse which the Creatures bear; they are also our Sighs and Groans which these Creatures utter.

The

The Creatures without Reason are dependent upon the Rational Creature: We give thanks to the Creator for them, who hath enrich'd them with so many Beauties; and they sigh for us, upon the account of the great Miseries wherewith they themselves overwhelm us, by the Order of our common Creator. We sigh therefore with universal Nature, and universal Nature sighs together with us, and for us: And these sighs proceed from a principle of Love, for 'tis the Revelation of our Glory, which the whole Universe expects; 'tis our Sovereign Happiness, and this Happiness is God himself, whom we love and earnestly desire to possess. This fine and lofty Figure here us'd by St. Paul, signifies therefore nothing else but the concurrence of the desires of Elect Souls, who are moving towards the Possession of God, the Object of their Love, and draw along with them in this Motion all the Creatures which were made for the Saints.

Sighing Love
without a
Figure.

When we leave the Figure we find a Love sighing, which is quite Open and Unveil'd: *And we also who have receiv'd the First-fruits of the Spirit*, (that's the Description of faithful Souls), *we sigh within ourselves*. The Love of faithful Souls does not always appear outwardly; but it Sighs, Acts and Aspires always inwardly, and within itself: *We Sigh within ourselves*. The Holy Spirit sighs for its Part, on its own behalf, and he also Sighs and Groans for us and in us. Thus all the Groans both of Nature and of the Holy Spirit are for us, and turn to our Account; they are our Sighs. Now, the

Holy

Holy Spirit is the God of Love and Charity; he produces no Sighs, but those which do proceed from a Source of Love: This is what St. *Austin* calls *the Groans of the Dove*; and what is this Dove? 'Tis the Church in the Desert, and far from its own Country; 'tis the Spouse of Jesus Christ, which the Lord calls *my Love, my Dove*. If this Spouse did not Love her Husband entirely, she would not sigh for him, and after him: But she loves him, and calls after him tenderly; *Where art thou, O thou whom my Soul loveth, tell me where thou Feedest, and where thou makest thy Flocks to rest at Noon? For why should I be as one that turneth aside by the Flocks of thy Companions? Why should I go to offer my Love to those who would be thy Companions, and share with them a Heart which I design entirely for thee? My well-beloved is mine, and I am my well-beloved's*: Our Union is mutual and close, and I cannot think of any other Union. This Holy Spouse in the Possession of this Heavenly Husband, tastes very great Pleasures: *He led me into the Hall of Feasting*, says she, *His Love is sweeter than Wine*. *After the King shall bring me into his Closet, we will make merry and rejoyce in thee*. The Joys which the faithful Soul tastes by this Chaste and Holy Union, in the Closet of the Lord, are call'd by the Apostle *unspeakable and glorious*. But this Love in its Desert, being Lodg'd in the *clefts of the Rock*, found, notwithstanding these Joys, matter for many Sighs. We shall now show what occasion she had to Sigh and Groan.

Love alone is one Reason of Sighing. There is with Love

is a Love without Sighs; Sighs and Groans without Love, and Sighs with Love. *Love without Sighs* is for Heaven; the Spouse of the Lord Jesus being perfectly reunited to her Husband, will be full of Joy, and will not have the less Love: For the Possession of God resembles in nothing the Possession of this World's Goods, and of that which is the Object of the Love of Worldly Men. The Enjoyment of this World's Goods is always attended with Loathing, and never quenches Thirst; it abates the Love, and does not satisfy the Desire: But the Enjoyment of God neither extinguishes the relish, nor the flames of Love; it only puts a stop to Sighs. This is the *Love of Enjoyment*.

Sighs without Love in Hell.

On the other Hand, there are Groans, and *Sighs without Love*. This is the State of those Miserable Souls who bewail to all Eternity their Contempt of the Lord, during their Life: *Sighs* are a name too mild for expressing the State of those miserable Creatures; Roaring is a more proper Name for them than Groaning: For *they are in outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of Teeth*.

A Love aspiring.

In fine, there are Sighs and *Groans with Love*; and this is what agrees to the faithful Soul in its Exile and Journey. It has Love, for it is possess'd of Divine Love, if it truly belongs to God; but with this Love there are always joyn'd Sighs and Groans: *This is aspiring and hoping Love*.

The first Cause of the Sighs of a faithful Soul; its Infirmities.

This Divine Spouse Sighs, in the first place, upon the account of the Sense it has of its own *Unworthiness*; for she understands how great an Honour it is for her, to be admitted into

into a Conjugal Bond with the *King of Kings*: But she understands at the same time, how much this Union requires Purity, and she is also sensible of a Thousand Infirmities in herself; she looks upon herself as Unclean, Worldly, and full of Vain Desires. Certainly she does not love the Lord Jesus, or else she must be sensibly affected with Grief, that she has only an imperfect Soul to offer to him, who gives to her a Heart so great and pure; and who joyns to this a *Throne*, a *Crown*, a House Eternal in the Heavens, and all the Glory of that House. Although she should only Sigh, because she has not been thankful enough for these Proofs of her Husband's Love, yet this were enough to draw from her Breasts very deep Sighs.

The Second Source of these Groans, will be the Knowledge of her own *Unfaithfulness*. The Souls who can Reproach themselves for being abandon'd to the Love of the World, and its Cares, will have great Cause to Sigh and Groan, before they be restor'd to Favour. The Holy Spirit will speak to the Heart of an Unfaithful Spouse, after this manner, Is it thus, that you ought to acknowledge the Favours and Honours which thou hast receiv'd from thy Eternal Lord?

The second Source of Sighs, her unfaithfulness to her Husband.

Must thou turn aside to go after the *Bahalims*, and run after thy Adulterers, and thy Lovers, to get thy Bread, Oyl, and thy Cloaths? Is not thy God thy Husband, he who made thee, able to provide for all these Wants?

Hoseah 2.

But the Souls which are Spouses of Jesus Christ, and have not carried their Unfaithfulness so far, will nevertheless have reason

enough to Groan, Sigh, and Mortify themselves, because of their abatements in Piety, their regard to Lust, and turning to the World, their coldness in their Love, which are such degrees of *Unfaithfulness*, as render them unworthy of the Honours Jesus Christ has done them, by uniting himself to them in a Conjugal Tie: They ought to Sigh and Groan seriously, when their Love is Rekindled.

The third
Source of
Groans;
the unkind-
ness of the
offended
Husband.

Cant. 5. 2.

Revel.

Cant. 5. 6.

The third Source of the Sighs of the faithful Soul, the Spouse of Jesus Christ, is, the Unkindness of her offended Husband. We usually find this Unkindness when we have been unfaithful, and when we have never so little slacken'd in the Exercise of our Love. The Spouse comes, he knocks at our Door, and calls out to us lovingly, *Open to me, my dearest Love, my Sister, my Dove, my Undesiled: Behold, I stand at the Door and Knock; if any one opens to me, I will come in and sup with him.* How often does it happen to us to be thus invited by the Voice of our Husband, and we Answer him slightly? Then the Husband withdraws, goes away; we would open to him but 'tis too late: He is no more to be found, and then our Soul is lost: *He who revives my Heart*, says the faithful Soul, *is gone; my Beloved has withdrawn himself; my Soul was chill'd when I heard him speak.* Yes, God may very justly deprive those of his Divine Consolations, who despise him, or do not sufficiently love him: But without this 'tis certain, that God often puts on a seeming Displeasure, with respect to his Well-beloved. This is to inflame their Love, when it begins

to Languish: He hides himself on purpose that they may seek after him, and to rekindle the flames of a Love which is extinguished. The Souls who have tasted the sweetness of Communion with the Deity, know what is meant by this Unkindness, they understand me, and the meaning of the Spouse, when she says, *I sought in the night-time, him whom my Soul loves.* The nights are made by the Absence of his Favour, and these nights are the days of Groans and Sighs, during which the Spouse says, *Come Lord, come, come quickly.*

The fourth Source of the Sighs of Divine Love is our sensibleness of the Judgments of God: For God does not only deprive an *Amorous Soul* of internal Consolations, but he sends it also External Pains and Afflictions. The faithful Soul does not cease to Love in this State, but it Groans under the Rod; *I groan'd like a Turtle; I mourn'd like a Dove,* Esay 38. 14. Sighs are properly the Language of a faithful Soul in its Sorrows; whereas Roarings, Murmurings and Blasphemies, are the Language of the Impious, when the Judgments of Heaven fall upon them.

The fifth Source of Sighs, is the withdrawing of the Spouse: For, in fine, whatever favours the Devout Soul receives from its Husband, it can never be near to him; the same space which separates Heaven from Earth, separates also the faithful Soul from its Jesus. 'Tis true, this Husband scatters upon the Soul full of Love, great Rays of his Favours, and sensible Marks of his Presence. The Spouse often says, *I have found him whom my Soul loves; I have found him, and will not let*

The fourth Source of Sighs; the Chastisements of the Father.

The fifth Source of Sighs; the absence of the Husband.

2 Cor. 5.
vers. 2. 4.

The sixth
Source of
Sighs; the
pouring out
of the Soul
in Prayer.

him go. But this presence of Grace, which is but a Shadow, in comparison of the presence of Glory, does not satisfy the Desires, nor fill the Soul. It only gives some foretastes, and serves only to encrease a fervent desire after full Possession, so that there is always occasion in this imperfect Enjoyment for Groans and Sighs. So St. Paul being possess'd with a great Idea of the Happiness of *being with Christ*, still finds himself full of Sighs and Groans; *We Groan earnestly, desiring, &c. we Groan being Burden'd, &c.*

Lastly, The sixth and last Source of Sighs, is Prayer and Supplication: In this Action the Spirit of God opens the Gate of Sighs, and suffers all our Groans to take Vent; for we know not how to Pray as we ought, *but the Spirit maketh Intercession for us with Sighs that cannot be utter'd.* These are good Prayers which are made after this manner, for the Spirit of God makes them; these Sighs are call'd *unutterable*, not in the same Sense that St. Paul calls the Joys of Paradise, *unutterable*; but the Sense of the *Apostle* is perfectly express'd by turning the Words thus, *the Sighs which cannot be express'd*; the Sighs and Breathings of the Soul, which come in so great a Crowd, that they mutually hinder one another's Passage, they are so violent and so numerous. The Sighs in their Efforts, to make way for themselves, become Sobblings, wherewith the Soul slips away, and goes to appear in the presence of God, and kiss his Feet. O how happy is the Man who speaks not of this great Subject, merely by Memory and Meditation, who loves God, and in the

the Transports of his Love, never Prostrates himself before him without this effusion of Sighs, Groans and Tears. This is the Prayer of the Closet, and of Retirement; this is the Prayer which is made in that happy, internal Solitude, whereof we have spoken in the preceding Chapter.

For a Conclusion of this nice Meditation, let us observe, That we have with good Reason said before, that the Sighs of Divine Love are inseparable from that Love, and that we have just Ground to make them one of its Characters. Take a faithful Soul in what Moment you please, you must necessarily find it seated near to one of these Six Sources of Sighs, which we have just now Remark'd, or else you will find it sometimes having at once all these Six Reasons of Sighing and Groaning. For it will always judge itself unworthy of the Love of God; it will always convict itself of some unfaithfulness to its Husband: It will often endure the unkindness of the Husband, to whom it has been unfaithful; it will often be found in an Afflicted State; it will always find itself too Remote from its Husband, and wish to be Re-united to him; it will always be pouring out its Soul in Prayers: And thus, Love will be always *Groaning*, until it become *Love Enjoying*.

Love is always Sighing, till it comes to Enjoyment.

A Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

O Holy Spirit, Spirit of Flame, Spirit of Love, I can neither Love nor Pray as I ought: Come therefore, O thou Holy and Sacred Dove, who lightedst upon my Saviour, come and teach me to Groan like a Dove;

Dove; come and pray in me by thy unutterable Sighs; thou shalt be my Second Intercessor. My Saviour, after his Death upon the Cross for my Sins, ascended into Heaven to Intercede with the Father for me: And thou, O adorable Spirit, who was sent to us, by the Son, in the name of the Father, descend from Heaven; come and *make Requests for me* in my Heart. And lift me up, O Holy Dove, upon the Wings of thy Charity, to carry me into the Bosom of thy Love. I will adore thee, and I will never cease to Groan and Sigh after the Possession of my Eternal Lord, until I obtain him. I will never cease to Embrace him, until I be admitted to the Marriage-Feast of the Lamb, who was Sacrific'd for my Sins before the Foundation of the World. To thee, O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory thro' all Ages. *Amen.*

C H A P. VIII.

Of Love desiring, or the desires produc'd by Divine Love.

The Eighth Character.

IF we had any Thought of excluding Desire, from being one of the Characters of Divine Love, we could not be admitted to do it, since in the beginning of this Work we have defin'd Love in general, by a desire of Union; and Divine Love in Particular, by the desire of Possessing God. If the desire of Possessing

Possessing the Person Lov'd, is not essential to Love, yet at least 'tis a Property so inseparable, that there can be no Divine Love upon Earth, without Desires, nor Desires of God without some Degrees of Divine Love: And therefore we can by no means comprehend the Philosophy of those contemplative Men, who would banish Desires from the exercise of pure Love. Let us see then what are the Desires which Love inspires.

There are Four principal Desires. 1. The truly faithful Soul desires to love much. 2. He desires to Love always. 3. He desires to be lov'd of God. 4. He desires to enjoy and possess God.

The first Desire which Love excites in our Souls is, to love more. A Soul full of faith, being possess'd of God, loves him, 'tis true, and knows very well that it loves him: But it knows at the same time that it loves him not sufficiently. It sees the whole extent of the perfections of God, who is the Object of its Love; it is sensible that there is almost an infinite disproportion between the degrees of the Divine Perfections, and the degrees of its own Divine Love. It is fully satisfied of the emptiness and vanity of the Creatures; but it knows also very well that it does not despise them enough, and that it does not make a sufficient difference between the Love it gives to God, and that which it bestows on the Creature. And the Sense of this creates in it a very sharp Pain, and a passionate Desire to love more.

The first Desire inspir'd by Divine Love, is to love more.

This is what our Lord calls, to *Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness.*

What it is to Hunger after Righteousness, Mat. 5. Blessed, says

says he, *are those who Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.* Who are those that Hunger and Thirst, but the Devout Souls who love God, yet are conscious to themselves that there is a great void place in their Breast which they desire to fill up? This Righteousness, which the Devout Soul Hungers after, is the Righteousness of Christ, which his Mercy imputes to us; 'tis the Remission of our Offences which we call Justification: This, I say, is the Righteousness which the faithful Soul Hungers after; for *our Righteousness consists more in the Remission of our Sins, than in the Perfection of our Vertues*, as St. Austin confesses. Nevertheless, a Devout Soul thirsts no less after the Righteousness, which Sanctifies than after that which Justifies. The thirst after justifying Righteousness is properly that of Souls Tormented, *i. e.* which tremble under the Terror of God's Judgements: But to search after Sanctifying Righteousness is that of Souls, which are more improv'd, and in whom *Love casteth out fear.* This Thirst is more excellent than the former, which has more of the Spirit of Bondage than of that of Adoption; this Thirst is more Disinterested, more sweet and peaceable, although it be no less Ardent.

Now, this Desire of being more Holy, is undoubtedly the desire of loving more, which makes the Amorous Souls say to their Husband, O my God, you know that I love you and also that my Love is sincere; but I know also, that I do not love you sufficiently: If I lov'd you as much as I would, I should love

my Neighbour much better, whom I scarce love at all; I should pardon the most cruel Offences committed against me, whereof I still keep up too great a Resentment; I should hate your Enemies, and not my own; I should love your Truth, and detest a Lie. We ought not to flatter ourselves, for we must know, that we love not God as we ought, unless we burn with a Desire of loving him more. Wo to these Souls, who applaud themselves, who are full, and satisfied from themselves: They take one fulness for another; they believe, that they are full of God, and love him sufficiently; but Self-love deceives them, and they are only full of themselves: For never was any Faithful Soul satisfied in this respect; it ought never to say, *'tis enough*.

The Second Desire which Love Inspires, The second Desire, is to Love always. is, that of Loving always. We see strange Catastrophe's in the Intellectual World, of Angels, who fall into the Abyfs; of the Stars of Paradise, which were cast into the Sea, which made it become Wormood; of Saints, or at least of those who appear to be so in their own Eyes, who become Apostates: And these Revolutions ought to possess us with a Holy Sollicitude, and awake in us the desire of Loving always. *'Tis true, that the Gifts of God are without Repentance, He is not a Man, that he should lie, nor the Son of Man, that he should Repent. 'Tis true also, that we are Seal'd by the Holy Spirit to the day of Redemption; and that the Spirit cries in our Hearts, Abba Father, and assures us, that we are the Children of God.* In fine, 'tis true, that the true Saints perse-

persevere always to the end, and are faithful unto Death. But what is it that assures to them the Possession of Grace and Glory? It is the Holy Spirit, I confess; but 'tis also this Holy Restlessness, which obliges them to Watch without intermission, and always to fear that which will never happen to them, and which may happen to them, if they should cease to fear: For when they cease to fear, they ought not any longer to live in Assurance; they are upon the Brink of the Precipice, when they fall into Security, and imagine, that they are in a pleasant Field far from all Danger.

When one
Loves, he
perswades
himself, that
he will love
always.

It is one of the Characters of Human Love, that a Man perswades himself, it will last always; the Suspicions which the Person belov'd may have of the inconstancy of the Person Loving, are accounted by the Lovers to be heinous Offences: He thinks it a great Injury done to him, to doubt of Perseverance in his Love. This Sentiment, so general in Lovers, is at least a Proof, that they intend to Love always; and this Intention is a Desire, that they may never cease to Love. Without this Intention and Desire, there is no Pleasure in Love; and in this Human Love and Intention, and Desire to Love always, there are almost always Delusions; for there is nothing in the World so changeable as the Heart of Man.

But in the Divine Love, there is nothing but what is Real and Essential; if we do not sincerely Desire to Love God always, we shall never find any Pleasure in his Love. To Day, God is my Friend, will some say

out to Morrow he will be my Enemy: And what shall I do then, what will become of me? When Men cease to Love that which they loved, they find out another Object, which supplies the place of the former, and makes them amends for the Loss of it. But what wilt thou find out, O my Soul, when thou shalt cease to love God? What wilt thou find capable to fill up such a vast Void? Thus thy Love cannot make thee Happy, but so far, as it is attended with this Thought, *I will love always*: Yes, O my God, I cannot cease to Love thee, without ceasing to be a Man, that I may become a Devil.

He who loves God truly, is perswaded, that God is his Sovereign Good; and he thought also to be perswaded, that nothing can secure to him the Possession of this infinite Good: And therefore he must of necessity desire to love God always, as he necessarily desires to be always Happy. This Desire of being Happy is inseparable from Mankind; and the Desire of loving God, is inseparable from the Saints.

We desire to love always, as we do, to be always Happy.

But will not this Desire cease, when our Love shall be in a place of safety? In the State of Glory, we shall love God, after such a perfect and immutable manner, that we cannot have the least shadow of Fear to lose this Love; and therefore it would be needless then, to desire the continuation of our Love. This Difficulty, which appears Specious, is not agreeable to the Rules of good Sense; for we shall then have as much reason to Desire it, as now: When we shall be perfectly Happy, would we not continue to

The desire of loving God will not cease, even in Heaven.

to be Happy? Does not the Possession of perfect Happiness, necessary include the Will and Desire of being always Happy? And so the perfect Love in Paradise, will be so far from extinguishing in us the Desire of Loving, that it will continue and quicken it: We shall find so much Pleasure in loving God, that we will wish and desire to Love him, to all Eternity.

If this be so, what becomes of that saying so often above-mention'd, that, Desires are inconsistent with Happiness: The Authors of that saying do even define Happiness, by a *Cessation of all Desires*; they proceed so far, as to say, that the Punishment of the Damn'd consists in Desires; the wicked Rich Man in Hell, was tormented with a consuming Thirst, which made him desire only a drop of Water, to cool his Tongue. There is no room to doubt, but that the Devils, and Damn'd Souls have two sorts of Worms, which gnaw them; *Worms which never die*. The first sort of Worm is the remorse of Conscience, which devours them; the second, is the Desires which consume them. But alas, how vast is the difference between the Desires, which make up the Happiness of the Saints, and those which are the Punishment of the Reprobate. The desire of the Saints Glorified, is a desire to love God; and the desire of the Damn'd is an act of hatred against God. They desire to be Happy, and to become so, by the Annihilation, if it were possible, of that God, who is the Cause of all their Miseries, by his terrible Justice. The desire of the Damn'd, supposes the Privation

The damn'd
are corroded
by two
Worms.

of that which they Desire; but the desire of Saints Glorified, includes the Possession of that which they Desire, and the actual Possession of it: They wish to Love always, and by this Means to be always Happy; which is a plain Proof, that they already possess what they desire to possess always.

A Prayer.

O God, I desire the increase of the degrees of my Love, and the continuation of it: From whom should I desire this increase and continuance, but from thee, the living Source of Love and Flame? I am resolv'd to Love thee more: But alas, O my Saviour, whereas this Resolution, and Desire ought to encrease my Love, I find, that it daily diminishes as I grow old; and this proceeds from the weakness of my Desire to Love thee more. To desire ardently the increase of thy Love, is to grow in Love; and so the Diminution, which I feel in my Divine Love, proceeds from the languishing of my Desires. These Desires are the Motions of the Soul towards Heaven; but thou alone, O my God, art the great and first Spring of all my Motions towards thee; come then, draw me, that I may run after thee. The worldly Men, in the height of their Debauches, find they do not yet love them enough, they drink excessively to inflame themselves, but I will go to that Well of Water, which Jesus, my Husband, has promis'd me: He that drinks of that Water which I shall give him, it shall be in him a Well of Water, springing up into Eternal Life. I will drink of this Water, and I shall never more thirst after the Vanities of this World: But I will drink Eternally,

John 4. 14.

nally, without fearing to be disgusted, and, without quenching my Thirst, at the Fountain of infinite Happiness. To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be Honour and Glory through all Ages. Amen.

C H A P. IX.

Of two other Desires which attend Divine Love, the Desire of being Lov'd, and the Desire of Enjoyment.

The third Desire, is that of being lov'd by God.

WE have consider'd the two first Desires of Divine Love ; to Love more, and to Love always ; the third, in order, is the Desire of being lov'd : This is a general Sentiment in all Love, Love would be paid by Love, Love would live and perpetuate itself ; but Love cannot be perpetual, unless it be mutual. 'Tis in vain to tell a Man, that he ought to be disinterested : To be loved by God is so much the Interest of a faithful Soul, and a Charm so pleasant, that 'tis neither possible nor lawful to oblige it to renounce this Interest, and consequently the Desire of being lov'd. It may be affirm'd, without Exception, that a Soul does not truly love, when it does not truly desire to be lov'd, by the Person whom it loves : Those, who are indifferent as to the Love wherewith God loves us, are also very indifferent as to the Love they owe to God. A Soul that is very willing to love, without desiring to be lov'd, is a Prodigy which is neither to be

fund

found in Nature, nor Grace. Nothing is so pleasant as to know that one is Belov'd when he Loves, but nothing is so cruel as to love a Heart, which will not love again.

How can we then lose the desire of being lov'd by God? Can we renounce the Hope of Happiness? Can we Sow always in a Field, which is a dry Rock, an unfruitful Sand? 'Tis true, tho' God should not Love us, he would always be Lovely in himself, because he is always Beautiful, and always Excellent: But the Question is, whether we could prevail with ourselves to love him, if we did not hope to obtain his Love. If he were inexorable to the Prayers and Desires of our Love, he would not be Good, with respect to us: And tho' we should be oblig'd to love him with his inexorable Rigor, it must be confess'd at least, that we should want the greatest of all Pleasures, *i. e.* that of being lov'd by God, and of knowing it.

This Desire is Essential to our Happiness.

To love God without Hope and Desire of being lov'd by God, would be a Torment equal to that of the Damn'd in Hell. When a Soul is lov'd by God, it enters into it's Closet, it is Honour'd with all Divine Illuminations, it partakes of all the Favours of Heaven: It sees all the Glorious Eternity before it, and this View Encourages and Supports it; it finds no more, with regard to God, Darkness, all is Light and Splendour to it; it's Love is to it the Pillar in the Wilderness, which leads it by Day, and gives it light by Night, whilst it guides it to the Heavenly *Canaan*: But if it is depriv'd of the Desire of being lov'd by God, it

Y

lan-

languishes, it's Fire is extinguish'd, it's Zeal dies, and Fears, Frights, Horrors, and bitter Sorrows become it's Portion.

He who desires to be lov'd, ought to desire to be lovely.

'Tis not difficult to perswade Holy Souls of this Truth, that they ought to desire to be lov'd by God; but they ought to be advertis'd, that this desire includes another, which is, that of rendring thyself amiable. How darest thou Desire, that God should Love thee, unless thou render thyself worthy of being lov'd? Therefore, O my Soul, wash thee, purifie thyself, amend the Deformities which disgust thy Heavenly Husband. 'Tis not with these internal Beauties, as it is with those which are External: With respect to the Latter, we must continue so as Nature has fram'd us, we cannot reform the Defects of a Face, which we were Born with; but by Grace and Application, we may amend the Deformities of the Soul, we may rectifie what was distorted, fill up the hollow Places and Vallies, level the high Places, and reform the Features of the internal Man: And by this Means thou wilt put thyself in a Condition to hear from the Mouth of thy Heavenly Husband, these sweet and comfortable Words, *Thou art fair, my well-beloved.*

4. The desire of Enjoying and Possessing.

The fourth Desire of the Soul which Loves, is the Enjoyment and Possession of God. What is it to enjoy God? 'Tis to possess him with a perfect Acquiescence. St. *Austin* has very judiciously distinguish'd the Use from the Enjoyment, when he tells us, that we may make use of this World's Goods, but we must not enjoy them; *i. e.* that we must not

not possess them with an entire Acquiescence, and perfect Satisfaction in them; this belongs only to a Being infinitely perfect, and to those Blessings which are Eternal. Upon which account Terrestrial Goods ought not to be desir'd, because they have nothing which is profitable to us, with respect to Eternity; on the contrary, they are rather hurtful, than any ways serviceable, and therefore are more to be fear'd than desir'd: But God alone can, and ought to be the Object of our Desires; as appears by the following Reasons.

1. The First is, that the Desires of the Soul, are the Motions by which it goes out of itself, to search after that which it Lovēs: Now, these Motions ought to be such Excursions as carry the Soul very far out of itself. O Devout Souls, be not ye like the weak Birds which hunt after Flies, but be like the Divine Eagles; seek after the dead Body, which is now living and rais'd from the Dead, fly streight and strong towards your Sun.

Reasons why
God alone
ought to be
desir'd.

2. Let us remember, that Desires were given us to advertise us of our Want: Now, we do not want Gold, nor Precious Stones, to make us Happy; we want only God, who contains whatever can make up the Happiness of a reasonable Creature. Man is all Wants, 'tis true; but God is all Desires, and altogether desirable.

3. We must only search after him, who alone possesses Beauty, Goodness, and infinite Pleasures, altogether pure; and God alone is thus compos'd: For every-where

else you will find much Bitterness mingl'd with some Pleasures; the Pleasures are quickly gone, and the Bitterness remains. 'Tis quite contrary with God, for the Thorns we meet with in searching after him, vanish away and disappear, and the Pleasure remains Eternally.

4. Search, O devout Souls, for him, of whom ye are assur'd, that ye will find him, by seeking after him and desiring him. If thou desirest and aspirest after Terrestrial Goods, thou wilt miss of them; they fly away like Shadows, whilst ye run after them, but they vanish like Shadows, when you think, you have attain'd them. If we Consecrate to God all our Desires, they will never be frustrated, and we shall not search in vain.

5. In fine, let us desire that Good which can never be lost, and that is God. When once he is given to a Soul, he never forsakes it; at least he does not forsake it for ever. He returns at his own Time, after he has hid himself for some Moments, to revive and quicken its desires.

He who desires to possess God, desires Death.

But we must speak the whole Truth. You ought to desire to enjoy God, which Enjoyment is not to be found here below; for my God *is a God who hides himself*; the Flesh is a Veil, or rather a Night of Separation, which keeps me at a distance from my God: This Flesh therefore must be destroy'd, this Enclosure must be broke through. *Your sins have separated between you and your God*, says a Prophet, and this wretched Sin is lodg'd in our Flesh; wherefore destroy the House from the very Foundation, that we may crush this

Enemy

Enemy under the Ruines of our outward Man. Thus we see, that *St. Paul*, who invites us to be followers of him, *Desires to be uncloathed, that he may be with Christ*; that he may Possess and Enjoy him. *To be uncloath'd*, is to die, and so the Faithful Man, who desires to be uncloath'd, desires to Die. This is a great Paradox to the Sense of a Carnal Man! Death causes horror in all living Creatures: *The Animal Man understands not this*; 'tis folly to him: There is nothing more true, and nothing which the Faithful Soul ought to repeat oftner; *If our Hope in Christ were only in this Life, we are of all Men most Miserable*. We ought to extend our View beyond Death; *'Tis appointed to all Men once to die, and after that to come to Judgment*. In dying we suffer nothing but what all Men suffer; and this common Passage of all living Creatures, is to us a singular Advantage, and a Way which leads us into the Region of Eternity.

We cannot Land in this Country but by a Shipwreck. This great shore of Eternity has two Landing-places: In one of them there is nothing to be seen but frightful Rocks, wither'd Trees, and Mountains which cast out Fire and Flames; there is nothing to be heard, instead of any Melody, but Cries, Lamentations and Groans. I do not at all Wonder, that those who sail towards these frightful Banks, are afraid of the Shipwreck which is call'd Death; on the contrary, I wonder that they fear it so little. In the other Landing-place there is nothing to be seen but Meadows which charm the Sight with

Two landing-places on the Coasts of Eternity.

2 Cor. 5.

with a pleasant Verdure, Trees of Life laden with Fruits and Blossoms, a Sun always Shining, a Heaven always Serene, and Torrents of Milk and Honey: There is nothing to be heard, but the Voice of the Bride and the Bridegroom, the sweet and melodious Conforts of Angels, singing the Praises of God. Alas, how weak are we to tremble, when we see our Vessel ready to split against such a Bank, not considering, that we shall be Gainers by this Shipwreck! We lose a wretched Body, a poor Vessel which must necessarily Rot and Perish; and we split in pieces upon an excellent Coast; where God, his Angels, and the Ministers of his Mercy, will come to gather us up, and carry us into the Bosom of *Abraham*. *When our earthly House of this Tabernacle is dissolv'd, we have a House, not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* Was St. Paul then afraid of the Destruction of this earthly House, the Destruction which we call *Death*: So far was he from fearing it, that he desir'd it; and therefore *we desire to be cloath'd upon with our House which is from Heaven.* O simple Souls, ye are willing to desire God, and ye also desire to possess him, but ye would not have this Possession cost you the least Thing: Ye have a fondness for this earthly Vessel, wherein God has shut up the Treasures of his Grace: Cease, Cease to Love, this vile and corruptible Vessel; and when God shall come to break it in pieces by Death, invite him lovingly, instead of repulsing him. Say to him, *Come, Lord Jesus, come, take my Soul, for it is not good for us to be here; I will follow thee, whithersoever thou goest.*

goest. Thou art taking me by the Hand to lead me into the Valley of the Shadow of Death; I will go, I will run after thee, and never forsake thee.

But our wretched Flesh will be apt to say, Death will cost me much Pain and Horror. If we could put off the Body, as we put off our Cloaths, I would willingly part with it, for it is no ways serviceable to me, but incommodes me. But tell me, O thou weak Christian, hast thou any Revelation, that in keeping the Body a longer time, the keeping of it will cost thee nothing? Perhaps one Year of Life will cost thee more Misery, than a thousand Deaths would do. The bodily Pains, the inconveniences of old Age, the Vexations which are caus'd by thy Enemies, and a hundred unforeseen Accidents, will overwhelm thee with such bitter Sorrows as will make thee desire Death.

Desire it then, before these bitter Sorrows come upon you, desire it, that you may enjoy God, and perfectly possess him, who is the Object of your Love. To inflame these Holy Desires, and cherish them, ye must learn what are the Pleasures ye shall find in God, what are the Glories, the Advantages, and the Benefits ye shall find after Death. This is a Business which is not to be done in a small space: The Portriature is too great. Besides, that it would be Difficult to represent, *that which Eye has never seen, nor Ear heard, and which never enter'd into the Heart of Man.* In fine, we dispense with this Work at present, because perhaps we shall meet sometime with an opportunity of setting before your

Eyes the Magnificent Idea's, which arise from the Enjoyment and Possession of God.

A Prayer.

O my Lord, and my God, I here find my weakness; Thou art my Strength and my Refuge; I fly to thee for sufficient Strength to heal this Weakness; I love thee, I desire to love thee more and more, and to love thee always; I desire thy Love, as the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks. I would be loved by thee, and enjoy all the Fruits of this Love in possessing Thee by an intimate Union; but the horror of Death freezes my Blood, and rebates all my favour. I must die, that I may see and enjoy thee: Why, O my God, cannot I pass to thee, without passing over this black and dark Abyss? O my God, pluck off from the Forehead of that which is call'd Death, pluck off, that hideous Mask which renders it terrible to me; scatter upon it the Rays of thy Divine Light, fill me both with Courage and with thy Consolations, that I may insult over this Monster, and say unto it, O Death, where is thy Sting, O Grave, where is thy Victory? Take me by the Right Hand, draw me out of this Red-Sea, deliver me from all evil Works, and save me in thy Heavenly Kingdom. To thee, O my God, my Saviour, to thee be Honour and Glory through all Ages. Amen.

CHAP.

C H A P X.

Of Penitent Love.

The Ninth Character.

WE have consider'd divers kinds of Love, a jealous Love, a sensible Love, a sighing Love, and a desiring Love: We must not forget the *penitent Love*, which is so necessary to sinful Men. This is not the Love of Angels, of Seraphims, of Spirits which burn in Heaven with the Love of God; for they having never committed Sin, need no Repentance.

The Love, whereof we are now to speak, is that of those Souls, who have suffer'd an Eclipse of the Rays of the Sun of Righteousness; and who have not always been under the benign Influences of the God of Love, and so have render'd themselves guilty of great unfaithfulness in his Love. Such was the Love of the Prophet *David*, such was the Love of those Publicans who left the Tax-Office to take upon themselves the Cross of Jesus Christ: Such was the love of that Woman who had been of a bad Life, but was Penitent; who having a hundred times kiss'd the Feet of Jesus Christ, water'd them with her Tears, and having wip'd them with her Hair, and embalm'd them with a Precious Ointment, receiv'd from her Saviour that glorious Testimony, *she loved much*. Such was the Love of St. *Paul*, after he had been a cruel Persecutor of Jesus Christ and his Church, he became

Great Exam-
ples of this
penitent Love

Luke 7,

came the greatest of the Apostles, and he alone labour'd more than all the rest together. Such was the Love of *Zachæus*, who finding himself honour'd above what can be express'd, because *Jesus*, the God of the Universe, enter'd into his House, renounc'd on a sudden all his ill-gotten Goods, wherewith the Profession of a Publican had fill'd his House: *I give the half of my Goods to the Poor, and if I have defrauded any Man, I restore them fourfold.* In fine, such was the Love of *St. Peter*, who was so weak as to deny his Good Master, and say, *I know him not*: But when he came to himself, being asked by *Jesus*, if he lov'd him, *Simon, lovest thou me?* He answer'd with extreme Grief, and infinite Ardour: *Yes, Lord, I love thee; thou knowest all things, and thou knowest, that I love thee.*

Penitent
Love has all
the Characters
of Divine
Love.

This penitent Love has all the Characters which we find in Divine Love: It is *continued*; having once suffer'd a sad Interruption, it Relapses not into it any more, and it is upon it's Guard, for fear of a Surprise on that side, knowing, that Relapses are Mortal. It is *Active*, and always in Motion. It is *Vigilant*, and sleeps not any more, remembering how dear Sleep cost it. It is *jealous*, it is sensible of the Interests of God, it Sighs, it Groans, and Desires as much, as any other Love.

This Penitent Love seems to have more fervor, than any other Love.

And this Penitent Love seems to have Characters of Distinction, which give it the Preference before all other Loves, for it not only Sighs and Groans, but it makes a great Noise, it Mourns, it sheds many Tears.

St.

St. *Peter* being Penitent, was so pierc'd with a Look of his Master, that he could not contain himself, *he went forth and wept bitterly*: i. e. He pour'd forth abundance of Tears; for Tears cannot be call'd bitter, unless they are plentiful. The Penitent Woman, who kiss'd the Feet of Jesus Christ, without intermission, and water'd them with her Tears, shed so many as to make a kind of Bath for those Feet which she Ador'd. *David*, in the acts of his Penitent Love, waters his Bed with Tears. Tears are the Blood of a wounded Heart, and the plentiful Tears of these Penitents were very certain Signs, that the Heart was deeply wounded and pierc'd with Love.

This Penitent Love costs nothing, neither Gold, nor Silver, nor Riches, nor Labour; *Zachew's* Love was rather profuse than liberal, in disposing of all the Goods of his House. The Woman, a penitent Sinner, bought a Box of very precious Ointment, and still made a greater Sacrifice, which was that of her Honour, in confessing all her Sins, and debasing herself in that manner before so many Witnesses, especially the *Pharisees*. St. *Paul* being in Love and Penitent, chearfully underwent Labours of incredible length, and very burdensome, to testify his Love to God. In fine, it seems, that this penitent Love has more Fervour than any other. The Rivers, which have their Spring-head in the Plains, have a smoother Course, but their gentle Streams flow more slowly into the Ocean: Whereas the Torrents, and the Rivers which descend from the Mountains, acquire a rapid Motion,

Motion, which continues until they come to the Sea. It seems this is a true Picture of Penitent Love, and that Uniform Love which is found in the Saints, who have always been Saints. These have a Habit of Love, which is always Uniform, always equal, and so is the less remarkable. Whereas, Penitent Love is a Spring that boils up, that comes from a high and distant Place, and which descends from the Mountains of Pride, upon which the Tempter had transported the Sinner, and for this Reason makes a greater Noise, and appears more.

Jesus Christ seems to give the Preference to Penitent Love.

There is yet more in the Case than all this; which is, That the Lord Jesus, the great Master of Love, and who should best understand it, seems to give the Preference to Penitent Love. For after he had given this Testimony to the Love of the Penitent Woman, *her sins, which are many, are forgiven, because she loved much*: He seems to declare absolutely for Penitent Love; for he adds, *He to whom little is forgiven, loveth little*. We should hardly be able to perswade ourselves, to understand this Maxim in the literal and rigid Sense; as if the Saints had no need of Remission for great Sins, or lov'd less, or were less oblig'd to love God.

Reasons which prove, that a Penitent Love ought not to have any more Fervor, than any other true Love.

Between Man and Man Love is not always measur'd by the Benefits which are done, but by the Intention and Affection of the Heart. The Lord Jesus preferr'd the Mite, which the poor Widow cast into the Treasury before all the great Offerings of the Rich. True Piety does not give it's Love to God, meerly upon the account of, and according to

to the Proportion of the liberal Gifts, it has receiv'd from him. The Poor often love God more than the Rich, who have receiv'd great Benefits from him; and so, altho' a Penitent be more oblig'd to God, than a Saint, yet this latter ought not to love him less. We have two great Motives of the Love of God, his Beauty, his Excellency, his Bounty and Mercy. We readily grant, that a disinterested Love is more Noble and Generous: To love God only for his Bounty, would be a Self-love, and a Mercenary Love. We have allow'd sanctify'd Souls to consider their own Interest, among the Motives which induce them to love God: But it is upon Condition, that Divine disinterested Love, which is founded only upon the Excellency of God, do as much prevail over our own Interest, as a Being infinitely Perfect, excels any created Being.

If it were so, that great Penitents, to whom God has forgiven great Sins, should love God more than great Saints, there would be *more and less* in the Love of the Faithful. There is doubtless *more and less* in the Degrees of Love; for all the Faithful love not God equally: But this inequality of Love is an Imperfection, which wants Support from God: For *the measure of loving God, is to love him without measure*, and our Love to God ought to be infinite. Nevertheless according to the Rule, which we now Consider, there will be an inequality in Divine Love, upon the account of Necessity and Duty: For then every Believer ought to love God, only in Proportion to the Sins which he has committed,

There ought not to be any inequality in Divine Love.

mitted, and which have been pardon'd him ; which cannot be, neither ought it to be thought of.

The Penitents are not always the greatest Saints.

If the Penitents did always love God more than Others, then the greatest Sinners would always be the greatest Saints ; for 'tis certain that Divine Love makes the Perfection of Holiness, whosoever loves God more is doubtless more Holy : Now we cannot reconcile this either with Reason or Experience ; we should think it a great Injury done to St. *John* the Beloved Disciple, whose Soul was always fill'd with Love, to say, he loved his Master less than *Peter*, who was so weak as to deny him, and rose again by Repentance after his fall. This would tarnish the glory of the Martyrs, who carried their Love to Jesus Christ so far, as to Die, and suffer cruel Torments for him ; if we should prefer before them the Penitents, and the vast Crowd of those, who after having offer'd Incense to Idols, sincerely Repented, and bitterly bewail'd their Sins : This would be to prefer these Holy Penitents above Angels ; for these having never Sinn'd, have no Obligation to God for the Remission of their Sins.

We ought not to suppose, that Penitents receive a greater Measure of Light and Grace ; which is necessary to make them Love.

The Saints love God with Knowledge, and proportionably to the degrees of Grace, which God grants them in order to this Knowledge : But it would be an Offence to the Spirit of Grace and Light, to say that he communicates himself more abundantly to Saints Penitent, than to Saints Persevering ; to those who have griev'd him and driven him away from them, than to those who have always Cherish'd, Ador'd, and kept him

him in the Temple of their Heart. Divine Love is strong or weak in us, according to the degrees of Grace which God grants us for producing this Love: For of ourselves we cannot love God, being born his Enemies, both in our Hearts and Understandings; we must therefore suppose, that Grace makes a stronger and more lively Impression of Love in the Souls that are Penitent, than in those that have been always Holy: A Supposition which is neither reasonable nor possible to be made. Grace acteth with a Sovereign Freedom; *the wind of the Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and as it listeth*; and therefore there is no certain measure of Grace in this Case. 'Tis certain, there are some Penitents who arrive at a Degree of Divine Love, superior to that of some Souls, who have always loved God after an uniform manner. But there are also some Souls, who having persever'd in Holiness, have arriv'd at a degree of Love superior to that of Ordinary Penitent Souls.

For the fuller understanding of this Mystery in Morality, it will be necessary to observe, That Grace does not destroy a Man's Temper, but it makes use of it, and moves it differently according to the end to which it designs the Saints. Great Vices and great Vertues require the same Temper. Brisk Spirits which are active, full of Heat and Fire, proceed very far in Wickedness, when the Spirit of the World and the Devil inspires them; and also when Grace quickens them, they act with greater heat and success than Others. Upon which account both

Grace acts differently according to the diversity of Tempers.

both St. Peter and St. Paul, two great Sinners, and great Penitents, carried their Zeal and Love to a great height, by the natural heat which appear'd in their Actions, and by their Actions in their Temper: But we must not always conclude, that mild and peaceable Spirits love God less, because their Love makes less noise, and appears less. All these Reasons induce me to believe, that we must not make this Maxim a General Rule; *he loveth less, to whom less is forgiven.*

The Love of Acknowledgment ought not to be less in ordinary Saints, than in penitent Saints.

Doubtless it will be said, That if we mean that Love which we call the Love of Knowledge, our Reasons are concluding; but that the Maxim in Question ought to be understood of the Love of Acknowledgment: For great Penitents having greater Obligations to God, 'tis just that they should be more Thankful. But we cannot relish this Exception; for there is no Soul truly Sanctified, which can or ought to persuade itself, that it is less oblig'd to God than another. Each faithful Soul believes, and ought to believe, that it owes its Salvation entirely to God, what way soever God makes use of to work Salvation in it, whether it be by a Perseverance uninterrupted, or whether he raise it up again after a fall, by a sorrowful Repentance,

The faithful Soul persevering has as much Obligation to God, as the penitent Sinner.

Think you that there is any Error in this? There is none at all. The faithful Soul persevering, whose Love has always been uniform and equal, is as much oblig'd to God, and even more, than the Penitent Sinner. O my Soul, if thou hast committed less Sin, what hinder'd thee from committing it?

Was

Was it not the Grace of God? Thou should'st therefore look upon all the Sins which thou hast not committed as Sins pardon'd: For the same Grace which would have pardon'd them, if thou had'st committed them, hinder'd thee from committing them. Are we more oblig'd to a Guide, who takes us out of a deep Pit, into which we had fallen by our negligence, than to him who held us fast by the Hand, and hinder'd us from falling into the Pit? On the contrary, we are more indebted to him who prevented our fall, because he sav'd us from the Fright, as well as from the Mischief. 'Tis an unhappiness to have been Wicked, tho' we be so no more; and therefore we are more oblig'd to that Grace, which preserv'd us in a holy and equal Perseverance, than to that which rais'd us up again from our mortal Falls: From whence I conclude, that great Saints persevering, ought no less to love God than Penitent Saints, to whom many Sins have been forgiven.

All these Considerations make me conclude, What is the true Sense of That this Maxim of Jesus Christ was advanced by him with the same design, which made the Maxim him elsewhere say, *Those who are whole need* laid down by our Lord. *not a Physician*: Which Words were spoken in Answer to the Offence taken by the Pharisees, who took it amiss that Jesus Christ should forsake them, and joyn himself with the Publicans. These People, said he, stand in need of a Physician, they are sensible of their Evil; they desire to have a Remedy, and it ought not to be refus'd them: But as to you *Pharisees*, who are whole, and desire

no Remedy, ye have no need that the Physician should visit your Souls. Who does not perceive, that this is an Irony, a sharp Reflection which ought to affect them deeply? For 'tis very well known, that these Pharisees were, for the most part, greater Sinners than the Publicans; but they were not sensible of their State, and did not desire to change it. Here, in like manner, Jesus speaks to a Pharisee, and with reference to a false Idea which the Pharisees had of their own Righteousness: *Publicans and Women of a bad Life go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you*; they acknowledge themselves Guilty, they Repent, they beg Pardon and Remission of their great Sins, and therefore they love more: Whereas the Pharisees who believe that God Pardons them less, have much less Love.

There is no disposition more opposite to Divine Love, than the Opinion of our own Righteousness.

This Reflection leads me to another, with which I will conclude this Chapter: Which is, that there is no Disposition more opposite to Divine Love, than the opinion of our own Righteousness. We are all very great Sinners; let us not examine whether others be greater than we, that's none of our Business. But let us be persuaded, that we stand in need of much Mercy, to Pardon us all our Offences; for if once this Spirit of Pride enter into us, whereby we believe that God Pardons us less, the Truth is, that we will love less, and the love of Knowledge will languish, when it shall not be supported by an Ardent Love of Acknowledgment. And therefore the Considerations which we have propos'd, to prove that the greater

Sinners being Converted, do not always love God more fervently than others, are such, whereby we may better Judge of Others than of Ourselves: For we must always suppose, after the Example of *St. Paul*, that we are the greatest of Sinners; altho' there be some excess in this Expression, yet God allows it as an act of Humility.

I conclude therefore, that Repentance, and the habitual and perpetual Contrition of the Heart, is in effect one of the Characters of Divine Love; and that the Error of those who tell us that pure Love will not have Sinners to reflect upon themselves, and stop to examine the place and occasions of their Fall, that they may be sorry for it, is intolerable. This Maxim, I say, is pernicious; and Destroys the Morality of the Gospel.

A Prayer.

O God, thou art the God of Love, but thou art also the God of pure Love; and no Love is pure which is not Innocent and free from Sin. But where is that Love, without Spot or Stain? It is not in this World, it has fled for Refuge into Heaven. And therefore, O our good God, after I have desir'd the Grace to love thee, I desire now the Grace of Repentance, that thou would'st break my hard Heart; that thou would'st Wound it with the piercing Arrows of thy Love, and that from these Wounds I may feel Floods of the Tears of Repentance flowing out: That so Repentance and Love being joyn'd together, may
Z 2 open

open the way to thy Throne. Repentance will be the Propitiation, it will appease thy Wrath; and Love will embrace thee so closely, that nothing can ever separate me from thee; so, that I shall be with thee thro' all Ages. Do this, O my Lord, and my God: And to thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Honour and Glory to all Eternity. *Amen.*

C H A P. XI.

Of the Signs of Divine Love: That one may know his own Love in himself.

A Judgement upon the Authors of the Moral Essays.

TIS very Natural, after we have explain'd the Characters of true Divine Love, to enquire into the Signs of it within ourselves; for these Signs are nothing else but Characters: With this therefore we shall conclude.

This is a Subject about which tender and delicate Souls do very much perplex themselves. There is no Salvation without a true Sanctification, *for without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*: But there is no true and solid Sanctification, which is not produc'd by a true and sincere Love of God: We must therefore know our future Salvation by our present Sanctification; and our present Sanctification cannot be known but by knowing our Love. According to this, must we be always at the Gates of Despair, and wavering miserably between fear and hope. This were a very sad State.

But the State wherein we see the greatest part of Christians, is incomparably more sad; they live in a stupid Indolence which creates Horror: They call themselves Christians; they have been Baptized; they go to Church; they receive the Sacrament; they are good Moral Men in some things, but they do not trouble themselves to search in their own Hearts the Spring of their Behaviour, to know whether it be the fear of shame and of human Punishment, or the hope of advancing themselves in the World by getting the Reputation of honest Men, or a principle of Honour, which is the great Motive of the Actions of such Men as are not of the Dregs of the People; or whether it be the true Love of God: In a Word, they do not enquire much, whether they act as Christians from a principle of Divine Love, or as Worldlings from a principle of Self-Love: For the most part they are often Ignorant, what are the true Characters which distinguish Charity and Lust: And in fine, they are afraid, lest by searching too far into their Hearts they should find there what they do not desire to find. This is a deadly and dreadful State with respect to Eternity; it is a Lethargick Sleep which leads to Death.

On the other hand, How shall we arrive at the Knowledge of our Inward Man? Some very able Men would persuade us that this is next to Impossible. They tell us, that Self-Love imitates so exactly the appearances of Charity, that they cannot be distinguished; for all that Charity commands, Self-Love performs. Charity would be known and lov'd,

The sad State of Worldlings, upon the knowledge of themselves.

The Writers of *Port-Royal* treat of Charity and Self-Love.

yet it does not hang out a Sign, because it would be also conceal'd: It is humble and sincere in the Confession of its own faults; it searches without Affectation into the esteem of other Men; it communicates things necessary to the wants of the Miserable; it bears patiently with the faults of Others. Charity gives without hoping for any thing again, it is always thankful for the good things it receives from God and Men; it withdraws us from Sense and the Pleasures of Sense; it is well-pleas'd in Mortification: Self-Love, say some, can exactly produce the same apparent Effects, and so all this is uncertain and full of Snares. In all these Signs of Divine Love in us, there is nothing to be found which we can securely trust to; we must therefore always remain in a state of uncertainty and doubt, about our present Grace, and our future State. Some seem to make this wavering and doubtful State even meritorious: *'Tis useful for the Just that they should not know themselves, and that they should not see in themselves their own Righteousness: This sight would occasion them to fall.* This is a question that must be decided before we proceed any further: For in truth it were in vain for us to trouble ourselves with examining the Signs of the Love of God in us, if after we have found them, we were no more advanc'd in the way of the true peace and tranquillity of the Soul. The Reasons why we cannot be of the Opinion of these Wise Men of the World, are as follows.

The third
Book of
Essays, p. 205.

Proofs that
we can know
our own Di-
vine Love in
our Hearts.

The first Reason is, That the Rule, *know thyself*, was always look'd upon in all Morali-

ty.

ty, as the greatest Precept of Wisdom: But this Precept will be only useful in Human Morality, if the Church can make no use of it. It were in vain for us to exhort Devout Souls to know themselves; for they will always tell us, and have good Reason to tell us so: God would have us to be in the Dark, with reference to our inward State; *It would not be useful to us to see our own Righteousness, this would be the occasion of our Falling.* If it be not useful to us to know our own Righteousness, there will be no Wisdom in enquiring after it.

The second Reason is the Authority of the Saints, who are of another Rank than those Saints, from whom the Authors we now speak of, have borrow'd their Christian Philosophy; a fine Philosophy indeed! The Moral Essays were receiv'd with great Applause; but if one examines them with a Heart a little *Spiritual*, he will discover in the Writers of them much more of a Human than Divine Spirit, and that the Seraphims did not bring to them that Sacred Fire which is taken from the great Altar. If they had consulted the Sacred Books, they would have learn'd, that the Command, *to examine ourselves*, is one of the most important in the Morality of the Gospel: *Try yourselves; know ye not yourselves, whether ye be in the Faith or no?* To be in the Faith, and to be in Love, is the same Thing: Is it possible that we should not be able to know, whether we believe in God and love him? This is a Commandment, without the Practice of which all the participations of the Sacrament

A Judge-
ment upon
the Moral
Essays.

of the Lord's Supper are Mortal to us ; *Let every Man examine himself, and so let him eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup : And he who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself.* O good God ! to what a strange Condition would this Doctrine reduce those faithful Souls, who seek earnestly after their Salvation ! They are led to a Table where they do not know, whether they shall find Life or Death. If the Knowledge of ourselves and our own Righteousness, is not only Difficult to a just Man, but also Dangerous, what shall we say of the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit ? Is that wont to command us such Things as are impossible, even with the Assistance of Grace ? Does it give us such Commandments, the Practice whereof will occasion our falling from Righteousness, and our Perdition ?

In the Apology for the Morality of the Reformed.

I will not here write a Treatise of Controversie, having fully examin'd this Matter in another Work, I will only add one Reflection : Which is, that such a Morality is less perfect, than the Pagan Morality. The general end of all Morality is the Tranquillity of the Soul ; and each Sect Boasts, they have found it ; that is to say, that they have found the way which infallibly leads to it, if Men will follow it. But our Moralists tell us, that by the Gospel-Morality we are oblig'd to abandon the Tranquillity of the Soul ! In troth, what can be the State of such a just Man, who believes himself oblig'd to be ignorant of his own Righteousness, for fear lest he should fall from it. He does not know, whether it is the way to Hell or to

Para-

Paradise. Can any pure Soul that regards it's Salvation, entertain such a Thought as this? What would become of that Hope, for which, at present, we so vigorously engage against the pretending Innovatours? How can one know, or hope for a Happy future Estate, if he dare not be assur'd of his present Righteousness for fear of Falling? This State perhaps is tolerable in our worldly Men, who have only a very general Will for Eternal Salvation; who live from Hand to Mouth, without troubling themselves about Grace for to Morrow. But for any one to say, that a Devout Soul, possess'd of God, and who earnestly endeavours to know his Eternal Destiny if it be possible, can remain in this horrible uncertainty, as not to know whether he acts from Lust, or Charity, from Self-love, or the Love of God; this is an Error of the Mind, which appears to us unaccountable.

But our Wise-Men tell us; That, *Man is* Moral Essays, *so weak of himself, that he cannot Support him-* ubi supra. *self: And by a strange overturning, which has it's rise from the Corruption of his Heart; altho' his Welfare consist in possessing Vertues, and his Misery in being full of Faults, nevertheless 'tis more dangerous to him to know his Vertues than his Faults; the Knowledge of Humility renders him proud, &c. Thus they endeavour to shew, that 'tis profitable for a just Man to be Ignorant of his own Righteousness. I confess, this Illusion is fine and delicate, and suitable to the Character of these Writers: But nevertheless, who does not perceive that this is a meer Illusion? A just Man who is capable of falling*

An Answer to the Objections of the Writers of Port-Royal.

1 Cor. 14.

Hab. 1.

We may distinguish in our Hearts, whether Charity is stronger than Lust or no.

falling from his Estate by knowing his own Righteousness, was never truly Just. *The Knowledge of his Humility renders him proud; it was therefore nothing else but a false Humility.* He who loses his Charity by knowing it, never had any thing but Self-love: *True Charity puffeth not up*, as St. Paul tells us: He therefore that is puff'd up, hath not true Charity; and this is one of the Trials by which we must examine true Charity. Look into thyself and into thy own Heart, and if thou findest thy Knowledge of thy own Righteousness puffeth thee up, thou hast not yet any true Righteousness; for 'tis the certain Character of Self-love, to *Sacrifice it's own Net, and burn Incense to it's own Drag*: But he who knows, that all the Good he does is the Work of Grace, by knowing his own Righteousness, is fill'd with Thankfulness and Humility.

These Gentlemen who are so wise in their own Eyes, tell us farther: *When there is Charity in the Heart, and it moves us towards such Objects as are proper for it; Yet since Lust often follows the same way, and is mov'd towards the same Objects, altho' from different Motives; There is such a mixture in the Mind and Heart, of these two sorts of Views and Motions, that one cannot certainly know which of them prevails, and which is the true Principle of our Actions.*

This, perhaps, is the strongest Objection that can be made in this Case: But it may be affirm'd, that these Wise-Men, who have so much studied Man, do not yet know him. The Disciples of St. Austin, the great Defenders of Grace, did not they sufficiently observe

observe all it's Motions? They forget what they elsewhere remark, that Human Passions may be helps to Vertue, without destroying Grace and Charity: They suppose a Thing impossible, *viz.* That true Charity can be in a Soul join'd in such a measure with Lust, that a Man cannot distinguish which of the two is most prevalent: But Divine Love is never a true Charity, unless it has Dominion over Lust, and that Dominion be sensible. Whilst Divine Love, without being quite extinguish'd, is in a State of Subjection to Lust, which happens but too often, 'tis no ways justifying: In vain will an Elect Person seek to know his own Righteousness, in this State; for he will not find it until he has risen again by Repentance. But Divine Love, which is undefil'd, cannot be a Slave to Lust; and when in a State of Righteousness, even that which is ordinary, we feel in ourselves the Love of God, we may be assur'd, that it is Predominant.

But, some will say, there is in the Heart a mixture of Lust and Charity: This may be, Lust does not always ruine Charity. nay, and it may be said, that it cannot be otherwise: Until Lust be entirely extinguish'd, it will concern itself in all Things; and this is that which is the Cause of our Imperfections, and the Imperfection of our good Works: But that which renders them imperfect, does not always destroy their Essence. *Some Motions of Lust, which proceed in the same way, and are carry'd towards the same Object with Charity; i. e. to the Glory of God, and the Good of our Neighbour, in stead of prevail-*

Two Things
ought to be
concluded,
from the Re-
semblance
which is be-
tween Chari-
ty and Lust.

prevailing over Charity and destroying it, do follow it, and are not unuseful to it.

In fine, they represent to us at great length, that Charity does nothing which Lust does not imitate; that worldly Honour, the care of our Reputation, Human Honesty, which are nothing but Self-love Refin'd, make, in the Conduct of Men, a perfect resemblance between a true Christian, and an honest Worldling. This is too true; but what is to be concluded from this? Two Things; First, That we cannot know the true Believer by his External Actions, for by them no certain Judgment can be made of him; we must therefore be content with a Judgment of Charity, which may nevertheless be sufficient to assist us in the Choice of our Friends; and to determine our Judgments, as to the degrees of Esteem and Love we ought to have for our Neighbours: For 'tis not reasonable to doubt of the Vertue of a Neighbour as long as we see no Reason to doubt of it. There is nothing more common than this rash way of Judging, which is Hypocritical: This is exactly the Accusation which some never fail to bring against honest Men, who love the Truth, and cannot love those who do not love Vertue; this is a rashness against which we ought to be very much upon our Guard, with respect to those whom we do not love so much as Charity requires.

The other Thing which we may conclude, is this, That we ought to be very attentive in the Examination of our Inward Man. The Inward Man is not altogether so difficult to be certainly known, as the Outward Man;
And

And there is no Man, who applies himself to his Duty, and is intent upon the Knowledge of himself, who may not certainly know, whether he acts from a Principle of Self-love, or from a Love to God. 'Tis easie for a Soul to search itself so exactly, as to see whether it's Motions to God-ward cease as soon as the Motives of Ambition, Interest, and Vanity are snatch'd away from it : For if this be so, it's Charity is only pretended ; but if it Supports itself, when it is destitute of these Human Motives, then it is sincere, true, and saving. Every Man who examines himself well, may know this. After we have asserted, that a Man may know the Signs of true Love in his own Heart, we must enquire what these Signs are.

. A Prayer.

O my God, I desire not here to have any Dispute or Controversie, but with my own Heart ; give me Grace to lift me up above all the Contradictions of erroneous Men, that I may search after thy Truth and my Peace in thee. O Divine and inexhaustible Fountain of Truth and Joy, lead me in safe ways ; lead me by the hand between the Precipices of Presumption, and the Abyss of Despair ; that I may learn to understand my own Righteousness, as being properly thy Righteousness, and as being thy Grace, which does all that I can have that is Good. To thee, O God, be Glory, Empire, and Strength thro' all Ages. Amen.

C H A P XII.

Twelve Signs of Divine Love, or a Recapitulation of this Treatise.

THIS Article, which might have been made very long, yet will not be so. It has been almost exhausted by all that we have said in this Work: The Tree is known by it's Fruits, and the Cause by it's Effects. We are now to discover more largely all the Effects and Characters of true Divine Love; the Devout Soul needs only to study itself, and see, whether it finds in it's own Breast all these Motions.

The first Sign of Divine Love is the continuity of it.

For instance, if it finds in itself the continuity of Love: For a Love interrupted, which comes only by Fits, which proceeds only by Leaps and Jumps, is doubtful and uncertain. See therefore, O Faithful Soul, whether ye love God always, *i. e.* whether ye do all your Actions, even those that are most indifferent, with a Prospect of advancing the Glory of God, directly or indirectly, mediately or immediately.

Second Sign of Divine Love, is to be pleas'd in hearing others speak of God.

Examine whether your Recollections be easie, and your Meditations Pleasant, whether ye find a sweet Relish in Prayer, and whether ye take Pleasure in hearing others speak of God: It is certain, that in this Case, vulgar Souls find nothing but what terrifies them; the Faintness of their Meditations, their want of Attention in Reading, their weariness in hearing the Word of God,

are

are so common in them, that they may be call'd general Faults; and yet there is nothing more opposite to the Characters of an ardent Love. If a dear Friend is so remote from us, that we cannot come at him, and one comes from this Friend, will we ever be weary of hearing him? Will we say, that he makes his Story too long, and too circumstantial; that he exaggerates the Matter, when he represents to us the Love which this absent Friend has for us? On the contrary, will we not join Days to Nights, to discourse of this beloved Person? If the Messenger does not speak well, and places not his Words in good Order, Will we refuse him Audience, and not hear him, because his Discourse is not Eloquent, provided it be intelligible? God, who is far distant from us, being invisible and infinitely remov'd from our Flesh, sends to thee, to tell thee News of himself, and entertain thee with his Love: Thou thinkest, that he who is sent from God, speaks too long, and unless he tickles thy Ears, and pleases the niceness of thy Palate, thou canst not endure him: This is an afflicting Consideration to a Faithful Soul; against which there is no other Remedy, but the Efforts of a contrite Heart, that labours to mortifie this Faintness and Lukewarmness which mortifie him: It may also, for it's Consolation, Examine itself yet once more, and consider, whether this unhappy Disposition does not proceed from the Structure of the Body; from a brisk Imagination which he cannot at all Master, and from a crazy Body, whose Motions cannot follow
those

those of the Heart; from a wasting of the Spirits, which fail in supernatural Operations, as well as Natural Actions: For our Soul is so unhappy, as to depend very much upon the Structure of the Body, to which God has united it for a time.

Third Sign
of Divine
Love is it's
Activity.

We have shown, that Love is Active, and loves Motion; and never suffers the Soul to be at rest, until it has found out it's well-beloved, and arriv'd at it's Centre. O Faithful Soul, by this activity thou mayest know the Strength and Truth of thy Love. A Love which stops in the middle of it's Course, is neither inflam'd, nor pure, nor vehement.

Fourth Sign
of Divine
Love is Jealousie.

True Love is Jealous; and of what is it Jealous? Of every Thing which dishonours God; whether by Sin or Error. *I have been, said Elias, exceeding Jealous for the Lord, because they have thrown down thine Altars, and killed thy Prophets.* The Prophet David represents himself as pouring out Rivers of Tears, because Men keep not the Law of God. Zeal corrodes Holy Souls. *The Zeal of thy House hath eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach thee, are fallen upon me.* This Jealousy extends to all Things which dishonour God, and disfigure his Church; and so Errors and Heresies are the Object of this Holy Jealousie of Christian Souls, as well as Vices and Crimes. We would not have any close Union with dishonest Men, who have neither Vertue nor Honour; and yet we make no scruple to have for our Friends those impious Men, whom we know very well to be so. Is there any thing more shameful, and more unworthy of a reasonable Man, than

Psal. 119.

than Impiety? We will have no Dealings with those People who speak ill of our Fathers, our Mothers, our Brothers and Sisters, and yet we make no Scruple to hear those wretched Men speak, who say all the Evil of God that his Enemies can say of him; who blaspheme Providence, and have no respect for the Mysteries of Religion, and who trample under their Feet, the Truths, which God has reveal'd, by attributing to Revelation every thing which may render it contemptible. *If any one love not our Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.* This is not to love the Lord Jesus, to see his Laws violated by Sin, and his Divine Person affronted by Heresie. Examine your selves about this Matter, O ye Faithful Souls, and by this Examination ye will know, whether your Love to God is Sincere and Ardent: And also if ye truly love your Neighbours, you ought to have a Soul deeply affected with Grief, to see so many blind Men, whom the Devil leads into the Ditch. Harken not to these false Doctors, who, to deliver themselves from this Scruple, say, that no Error is Damning, when a Man is sincere in believing it.

To be sensible of the Afflictions of the Church, is also a true Sign of the Love of God. If we love God, we love every thing that belongs to God: Now, nothing does more belong to God, than his Church, which he calls his Spouse, his Well-beloved, his Dove, his Undeiled one, and his only Love. When we see this Church over-spread with Superstitions, Idolatries, and False-Worship,

Fifth Sign of Divine Love is, that it is sensible of the Afflictions of the Church.

Part II.

A a

why

why should not we bewail the Victories of the Devil, of Hell, and of the World? Shall we see with dry Eyes Millions of Souls which bear the Image of God, led away to Hell? And when we see the small Remnant, which God has reserv'd according to the Election of Grace, become a prey to Lyons and Bears, torn in pieces by Executioners; Holy Men dragg'd to the Scaffold, broken upon the Wheel for the name of Jesus Christ; the Blood of the faithful running down in great Streams; Conscience put in the Fetters of an infernal Inquisition, subjected to the Persecution of an infinite number of false Pastors, who are become furious Wolves: 'Tis impossible, I say, if one loves God, to behold these Objects without Trembling, and without a holy Indignation. Those who look upon such bloody Tragedies, without any commotion and resentment against those who are the Authors of them, are not mov'd with the Zeal of *Elias*, neither do they embrace Divine Love as he did; neither are they mov'd with the Zeal of *St. Paul*, who call'd *Elymas a Son of the Devil, who perverted the right ways of the Lord*: Nor with the Zeal of *St. Peter*, who told *Simon* the false Doctor, that he could not be partaker of Salvation: Nor with the Zeal of Jesus, who without sparing the Pharisees and false Doctors of the Law, treated them as Hypocrites, as stinking Sepulchres, and Seducers.

The sixth
Sign of Divine Love is,
that it
is predominant above
all other
Loves.

We have many times said, That Divine Love ought to have dominion over all other Loves. Examine yourselves therefore, O devout Souls, and see whether your Divine Love

Love overtop all other Loves : Not only the love of the World ought to be Banish'd, but the Love of yourselves ought also to be so far subdu'd, that it may yield up itself as *Isaac* did, to be Sacrific'd at all times, when God shall require the Sacrifice of it from you. *Now I know that thou lovest me*, said God to the Patriarch, the Father of the Faithful, when he laid his Knife upon the Throat of his Son : By this ye will know, that ye love God, if ye are always ready to renounce every Interest for that of God and his Glory. But this Subject has been largely handled already.

Charity to our Neighbour is so closely united with Divine Love, that the one cannot be without the other. *If any one say that he loves God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Lyar*, says the Apostle, who may be call'd both the Disciple and the Master of Love. Thus you must consider, whether ye Pardon from the Heart, the Injuries which have been done you, whether you do good to your Enemies, whether ye have a love of Charity for those whom ye Judge most unworthy of your Love of Esteem ; whether you earnestly desire both their Conversion and Salvation ; whether ye are willing to take pains for promoting it ; whether ye do fervently beg it of God ; whether ye feel in yourselves a disposition to rejoyce, if this Conversion should happen ; whether you have made a perfect Sacrifice of all your Resentments, and all your designs of Revenge : This is what concerns your Neighbours, who are your Enemies. As to others we must also examine ourselves, whether we are in Charity with

The Seventh Sign of Divine Love is, love for our Neighbours.

them ; whether we are sorry when we see them fall ; whether we bewail their Sins, as we do our own ; whether we do not use all means lawful and honest to deliver them from evil ; whether we spare as much as is possible their Reputation and Honour, whilst we oppose their faults ; whether we are truly affected with Compassion for all their Miseries, and are ready to supply all their Wants. This is a small Abridgement of the Duties of Charity, we owe to our Neighbours, which may discover to us whether we love God truly.

The eighth Sign of Divine Love is, the Sacrifice of our own Will:

The renouncing of our own Judgement and Will, the Sacrifice of our own Will, is certainly one of the most excellent effects of Divine Love ; and 'tis also one of the most certain Signs of it : This is more than to Sacrifice our only Son. See therefore, O devout Souls, who would be assur'd that the Love of God dwells in you ; see whether ye are dispos'd to say, with a Spirit truly humble ; *not my Will, but thine be done. The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. It is the Lord, let him do whatsoever he pleaseth.* In Human Love there is not a more certain Proof of an entire Devotedness to the Person *beloved*, than to Will all things which it Wills, even tho' it be contrary to the dearest Interests of the Person *Loving*. This is yet much more true, in Divine Love.

The ninth Sign of Divine Love is, the humiliation of ourselves.

The Humiliation of ourselves is absolutely necessary to the practice of Divine Love ; and to convince us of this, we need only review what has been formerly said about it. Whilst

Whilst we are something in our own Eyes, we are nothing in God's Eyes, so that we are oblig'd to plunge ourselves into the Abyss of our own Emptiness, that we may love God, and be loved by him. We must know the Excellency and Beauty of God, that we may love him; and we cannot perfectly know, that God is infinitely Beautiful, infinitely Good, and worthy to be infinitely Lov'd, but by setting in opposition to him our own Weakness and Deformities. Consider therefore, O holy Souls, who aspire after the perfection of Love; consider whether ye have a profound Humility, whether you are fully possess'd with a Sense of your Miseries, for ye cannot have a better proof than this, that ye have the Love of God.

We have formerly said, That Divine Love makes in Elect Souls a true Transformation, a kind of *Metamorphosis*; so that 'tis no longer the same Creature. Examine therefore, O ye faithful, and see whether ye have chang'd your over-ruling principle, and whether you can say, *'Tis no more I that Live, but Christ that liveth in me; and the life which I now live, is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* If ye have Divine Love it will be your over-ruling Principle, and if ye are yet over-ruled by another Love, the love of God is not in you. Ye may easily know, whether Divine Love is the over-ruling principle in you, by examining whether ye are always ready to Sacrifice to him all other Loves.

If ye will ye may search in yourselves for another very certain Sign of Divine Love, which

The tenth Sign of Divine Love is, the Change of the over-ruling Principle.

The Eleventh Sign of Divine Love, is hatred of Sin.

Pfal. 139.

which is, an infinite hatred of Sin. If we love God we ought to hate all his Enemies : *Shall I not hate all those who hate thee ? I hate them with a perfect hatred.* Now Sin is the great Enemy of God, which forcibly takes away from him his Subjects and Children ; which defaces his Image everywhere where it ought to be Imprinted ; which sets up its own Idols in his Room ; which inspires all the intelligent Creatures with a Spirit of Rebellion against him. The wretched Complaisance we have for Sin, for Heresy, and for wicked Men, is an infallible Proof of a languishing Love. 'Tis true, that the hatred of Evil is general enough in Mankind, but it is the hatred of that evil which is called the evil of Punishment, and not of that which is called the evil of Sin : We would not suffer evil but we are very willing to do it. Do not take this kind of hatred of evil to be a Sign of Divine Love ; for it is an effect of Self-Love : And ye ought also to be advertis'd that all hatred of Sin is not a Sign of Divine Love ; we hate Sin, because we know that Punishment will follow after it : If we could extinguish Hell-fire, we should have no aversion to the flames of Lust. This is certainly one of the most dangerous Illusions which the Heart can suffer, in this Examination of the sincerity of Divine Love within us, and therefore we ought to be very careful in this Case, and not suffer ourselves to be impos'd upon by Self-Love disguis'd.

These Signs may be Multiplied, but some of them are coincident with Others : For the

the Sense of our own Misery, the perfect Abstractedness from all sensible Things, the infinite adherence to a Being infinitely perfect; the subduing our Passions, our repoling an intire confidence in God, without relying on our own Strength, or any external Helps; to be uneasy when God withdraws himself, with Sighs to long for a Reunion with him: All these Sensations are undoubtedly Marks of Divine Love; but they are also included in the Signs we have already mention'd. I will conclude therefore with a Sign which I believe to be the most certain and undoubted, and that is a certain Sensation of Joy which cannot be defin'd: It is the Transport which we have call'd a kind of Extasy; 'tis that Joy which *St. Paul* calls *unspeakable*; 'tis that Joy which *passes all understanding*: It is a certain sweet Relish which the faithful Soul finds in the practice of its Duties; this Relish is never chang'd, is never lost; it resists all the bitterness of Persecution, Prison, Banishment, Dungeon, and most cruel Torments. These Tastes, these Pleasures, these Sweetnesses conduct the faithful Soul unto the ocean of Glory. Since this is the work of the Holy Spirit, and this Spirit is peculiar to the Elect, there can be no uncertainty in this Case; for the Reprobate and those who do not truly love God, never experience any such thing: But all this is a proof of that Sensation, which cannot be maintain'd by Arguments, for convincing those who deny it. Thus it is no ways expos'd to the Exceptions of the Prophane, but very much to their Railleries; but a pious Soul ought to raise itself above them. A a 4 These

These are the principal Signs of Divine Love, which we ought to seek after in our Hearts, to assure ourselves in a matter so important: *By this ye shall know, whether ye are truly my Disciples.* To throw us into distrust, all this is oppos'd by the deceits of Self-Love, *the Angel of Darknes, who transforms himself into an Angel of Light*: But we know well enough these Deceits, and therefore the Examination of the Heart which we require is not a superficial Examination, but a deep search which is reiterated, and which descends even into the most hidden recesses of the Breast. If we were only told, that 'tis difficult to know when we act from a principle of Divine Love, or from a nice and refin'd Lust, we should readily grant it; but they suppose it a thing impossible, and that it is not at all fit for a Just Man to know his own Righteousness. 'Tis this Maxim which we oppose, as being an Enemy to the Tranquillity of the Soul; 'tis however necessary, that we well consider the difficulty there is, to wind ourselves out of this Labyrinth, in which our own Self-Love has shut us up: But this Reflection which should oblige us to be very attentive, ought not to make us despair of finding that which we seek after; it ought only to make us use great precaution, that we may avoid being impos'd upon. There are none of the Signs which we have just now given, about which it will not be very useful to give Precautions, that we may avoid a surprize; but this would lead us too far beyond the Bounds which we have prescrib'd to ourselves: Those who will examine

mine themselves about these Signs of Divine Love, will of themselves take the necessary precautions, and provided they implore devoutly the Spirit of Grace, that Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth, will not permit them to be deceiv'd.

A Prayer to the Holy Spirit, for obtaining the Grace of being Guided in this important Enquiry.

O Holy Spirit, thou Spirit of Light and Fire, Thou Spirit which searchest the depth of my Heart, come to my assistance. I know how much it concerns me, that I should not mistake in the search of my Heart. There are in this Heart an infinite number of Roads, and there is a way that seemeth right in a Man's own Eyes, but in the end it tendeth to Death. O my God, be thou my Guide, make me careful to distinguish well the love of Charity, from the love of Lust: To take one for the other, will cost me no less than Eternal Death; and yet there is nothing more easy than to mistake in this Case, because Lust, that Angel of Darkness, transforms itself into an Angel of Light, and assumes both the names and appearances of Charity. Alas, O my God! If thou abandon me to my own Ignorance, if thou deliver me up into the hands of Self-Love, that Tyrant which blinds all his Subjects, and feeds them with fancies, I am a lost Soul: I shall fall into a wretched Security, and then I shall say, I am a Queen, and shall see no Sorrow; I shall say, Peace and Safety, and sudden Destruction will come. 'Tis thou, O holy adorable Spirit, who criest in our Hearts,
Abba

Abba Father ; 'tis thou who bearest Witness with our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God : *And how bearest thou Witness ? 'Tis by making us read in our Heart all the Signs of thy Divine Love. These are the Signs and Marks which I now search for within myself. Alas ! I do not see in my inward Parts any thing to comfort me, and give me that holy assurance that I love my God with all my Heart ; I see nothing but infirmities and weaknesses : But on the other hand, O Divine Spirit, I know, that thou relievest our Weaknesses, that thou searchest our Hearts, and knowest the Affections of our Spirits : Come therefore to me, create in me a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me. Kindle the fire of Divine Love, and when it is well-kindled and become great and sensible, then I shall feel it, see it, rejoyce in it, and render thee eternal thanks for it. Prevent all the cheats which the flattery of Men, and the deceitfulness of my own Flesh, may put upon me : Let me rather incline to the side of fear, than to that of presumption, or that of my own Righteousness. Let me work out my own Salvation with fear and trembling ; give me a holy dread of myself : Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. Nevertheless suffer not, O my God, this holy Sollicitousness to proceed so far as the Gate of Despair, and to descend to the Mouth of the Abyss ; preserve in me a holy and sweet tranquillity, which may fill my Soul with peace and assurance of my Election ; but let me remember to confirm it, i. e. to assure myself of this Election by good Works. To thee, O my Comforter, the Spirit of Sanctification, to thee, as to the Father and the Son, be Honour and Glory thro' all Ages. Amen.*

The

The Author's Thanksgiving.

O My God, Thou art my *Alpha* and *Omega*, my Beginning, and End, I began with the invoking the Good Spirit, that I might have his Assistance; I end with Thanksgiving for the Assistance he has afforded me. I have finished a very small Work, but I have furnished Matter for a very long Course; I have run thro' all our Duties; I have inquired into the Love of the World, and the Love of Lust, that I might drive them away; I have found thy Love, and described all the Means of settling it within me. These are Duties of a great Extent, this is a course of an infinite Length, since it leads us as far as Eternity. I have left every-where the Marks of my Weakness; but I have spoken in the Sincerity of my Heart. Pardon me, O God, what is not so well written as it ought to have been, and give me Grace to say to Thee, with an humbled Soul: If there be here any thing that is Good, it proceeds not from me, but from the Grace which dwelleth in me. O God, save me, draw me, that I may run after Thee, until I have found the Place, where I shall possess Thee, thro' all Ages, *Amen.*

A TABLE



A
TABLE
OF THE
CHAPTERS
IN THE
Second Part.

O F the Degrees of Divine Love.	Page
	155.
CHAP. I. The first degree of Divine Love : We must Love God with our Heart.	157.
II. The second degree of Love : We must Love God with all our Heart, and above all Things,	162.
III. The third degree of Love : God will have our whole Love, with a total Exclusion of the Love of the World.	166.
IV. The fourth degree of Love : How our Love to the Creatures may be Innocent, and do no prejudice to the whole Love which we owe only to God.	169.

V. The

A T A B L E.

- V. *The fifth degree of Divine Love is to love God more than ourselves, and to Sacrifice to him all our Proprieties. Five great Sacrifices in this fifth degree of Love.* 178
- VI. *Of the Sacrifice of our Temporal Interest.* 192
- VII. *A continuation of the fifth degree of Divine Love. The second Sacrifice is that of Self-Love.* 202
- VIII. *A continuation of the preceding Chapter. Of the Sacrifice of Self-Love, and what the Sacrifice of this Self-Love is.* 207
- IX. *Of the third Sacrifice contain'd in the fifth degree of Divine Love, which is the Sacrifice of our own Judgment.* 213
- X. *The fourth Sacrifice contain'd in the fifth degree of Divine Love is, the Sacrifice of our own Will.* 224
- XI. *Of the fifth Sacrifice contain'd in the fifth degree of Divine Love, which is the Sacrifice or Mortification of our own Excellency.* 234

A continuation of the Second Part. Of the Characters of Divine Love.

- CHAP. I. *Of Love continued or persevering. The first Character.* Page 249
- II. *Of the activity of Divine Love, and of Watchfulness. The second Character.* 259
- III. *Of Jealous and nice Love. The third Character of pure Love.* 268
- IV. *A Love sensible of the Interests of God. The fourth Character of Divine Love.* 276

V. *Divine*

A T A B L E.

- V. *Divine Love loves silence. The fifth Character of Divine Love.* 284
- VI. *Divine Love loves solitude. The sixth Character.* 286
- VII. *A groaning Love, or the sighs of Divine Love. The seventh Character.* 296
- VIII. *Of desiring Love, or the desires produc'd by Divine Love. The eighth Character.* 306
- IX. *Of two other desires which attend Divine Love. The desire of being lov'd, and the desire of Enjoyment.* 314
- X. *Of penitent Love. The ninth Character.* 323
- XI. *Of the signs of Divine Love; that one may know in himself his own Love. A Judgment upon the Authors of the Moral Essays.* 334
- XII. *Twelve signs of Divine Love, or a Recapitulation of this Treatise.* 344
-

F I N I S.



